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THE BRIDLE ROADS OF SPAIN



George John Cayley.

THE BRIDLE ROADS
OF SPAIN OR LAS ALFORJAS

BY

GEORGE JOHN CAYLEY
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
MARTIN HUME, M.A.
AND RECOLLECTIONS OF THE
AUTHOR BY LADY RITCHIE
AND MRS. COBDEN SICKERT

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INTRODUCTION

THERE was a stripling once, long long ago, who, strange as it seems now, was in some sort identical with myself. He did not think it at the time, but he must have been rather an unusual boy ; for he had an overmastering passion for books, and cared not for much else. He had been taught very little, but he was already trilingual, and devoured everything in the shape of reading in either of his three tongues that fell into his way. From the strange mixed mental pabulum thus provided he gained much vague impression and stuff for dreams, but no sense of reality or of the applicability of what he read to actual life.

Once into his hands, which were mine, there came, I know not how, a book in English with a Spanish name, "Las Alforjas." Anything Spanish appealed to me, for I loved the very sound of the Castilian words ; and "the saddlebags," of which the title was the translation, were familiar objects to me : brightly embroidered twin sacks of stout canvas to sling across the back of a mule or eke to carry oneself at a pinch in lieu of the carpet-bag or portmanteau of civilisation. Moreover, Spain itself meant to me as a boy a place of pleasant, but perfectly prosaic, sojourn, where elderly relatives were delightfully indulgent and had expansive views with regard to tips.

What wonder, then, that I should cast myself avidly

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upon "Las Alforjas ; or, The Bridle Roads of Spain, by George John Cayley," a book in two volumes with a quaint woodcut title-page to each, bearing a picture of two men in Andalusian garb, two mules, and the bulging alforjas that gave the title to the work? It is not too much to say that the book for the first time opened the gates of a new world to the eager youngster who devoured it. I can recollect through the long dim vista of intervening years, as if it were yesterday, the exquisite delight it gave me to realise from its pages that romance and picturesqueness were not confined, as I had supposed, to the men and times of long ago, but still surrounded us in our daily lives if only we had the faculty to see them. Spain, the workaday Spain that I knew, assumed a new guise. I realised, as if by a flash of lightning, that the costumes I had seen so often were picturesque, that the turns of speech familiar to me were quaint and archaic, that the dirty-looking posadas I had peeped into were widely different from English country inns ; and that the stern rugged granite mountains bathed in glow of gold and shadows of purple brought to the soul a new sense of the beauty of atmosphere. I learnt from the book for the first time that the world was fair to look upon, and that adventure with a delightful spice of lawlessness and risk was within the reach of a boy who mounted a donkey and rode along the highways and byways that I had seen from the banquettes of a diligence or from the windows of one of the few Spanish railroads then in existence.

I revelled in the high-spirited adventures of the two young Englishmen who had bought ponies in the extreme south of Spain, and had ridden them unattended, disguised as Andaluz muleteers, through all the country to the Pyrenees. It was patent to me, of course, that the writer was

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extremely shaky in his Spanish, and I recollect scoffing hugely at the pretence that any one who called a Custom House officer a *doganero* could possibly be mistaken for a Spaniard. But the scenes in the *ventas* by the wayside, the vastness of the landscapes, the lonely tracks through the rugged mountains, the tragic encounter with the footpad near Seville, all described with racy picturesqueness of speech and unfailing humour, brought home to me with absolute truth the very spirit of Spain. The somewhat lackadaisical love-letters in which much of the narrative is contained seemed to me an unworthy vehicle for such heroic, but yet perfectly attainable, adventures, and most of the philosophical discussions by the way were ruthlessly skipped with a boy's eagerness to "cut the cackle and get to the horses." But, with youth's eclecticism, the book was enshrined in my heart as an incomparable masterpiece, and conned again and again with delight. It led me too to the book of all books, "Don Quixote," before which even "Las Alforjas" paled, and by which, after a time, it was supplanted. But, though the Knight of the Mancha much more than filled its place, "Las Alforjas" was kept in loving memory for what it had opened to me, and through more years than I care to think the recollection of it was cherished gratefully, though the book itself had long been lost; and I fondly thought that no other living soul but myself had ever heard of it.

But one day I was seated at a large London dinner-party next to a gifted lady who asked me whether I had ever heard of such a book as "Las Alforjas; or, The Bridle Roads of Spain." Had I ever heard of it forsooth? My answer was that I thought no one else ever had; but to my surprise it appeared that George John Cayley had left behind him a small circle of admirers who reverently

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preserved the tradition of his attractive and unconventional personality, and believed in his wayward genius. And, so, I was prompted to read "Las Alforjas" again. It is always a risky experiment to review in the searching light of long experience the literary judgments of enthusiastic youth, and in my case it was more than usually difficult; because since I had known and loved Cayley's book I had during the last twenty years read all, and reviewed most, of the books on Spanish travel published in England; and my faculty for admiration had been considerably diminished in the process. For truth to say many of such books are hopelessly bad in the eyes of a person who knows the country well. They are written for the most part without any attempt, or indeed opportunity, to study from the inside the national life they profess to describe, and with no sympathy for the country or the people. Railway travel, now general in Spain, whilst enormously facilitating communication and increasing the number of foreign visitors to the country, has rendered it more difficult to join in, or even to see, the life of the people; and of no other country in Europe is it as true as of Spain that a traveller who never leaves the iron track and the saloon carriage knows no more of the country when he leaves than when he enters it.

So, although I knew that "Las Alforjas" was not open to this objection, for Cayley wrote just before the era of Spanish railways, I took up the book with a lingering fear that the aroma of it that I had cherished for so many years would vanish before critical scrutiny. It came through the ordeal triumphantly, though not unscathed. One saw immediately that if George Borrow had not written "The Bible in Spain," Cayley would have written "Las Alforjas" differently or not at all. The phraseology was somewhat stilted and old-fashioned, and the verbal fun a little forced

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in places in poor imitation of Dickens. The love-making in the letters, too, was a bit wearisome ; as indeed I had found it in my youth. But when these little deductions had been made, enough remained to stamp the book as a work of genius, worthy to stand on a lower shelf as a little classic in the same book-case as Borrow and Ford.

The author was a young man of five-and-twenty, who in 1851 was forced by ill-health to winter in Seville ; and with an English friend, and apparently prospective brother-in-law, started with two bought ponies and the saddlebags early in the year 1852 to ride slowly to the French frontier at Irun. They were dressed, as, alas ! it would be impossible for them to be now, in the smart old Andaluz garb, with velvet-tufted *calañes* hats, embroidered jackets with silver buttons, breeches and gaiters. Their road led them to many famous cities, of which, truth to say, they show very little appreciation. Even peerless Granada gets but scant perfunctory praise. But upon the open road, in the sunbaked villages upon sterile hillsides, amongst rude boors sitting round the blazing fire of vine cuttings in inn kitchens, Cayley is at his best : full of keen observation, witty comment, racy description and whimsical fancy.

The Spain he describes is that of Borrow seen in the last years before the great change swept over it, a change that in forty years transformed it more than the previous four hundred had done. Gone now, or almost gone, are the quaint provincial costumes that made of Spanish travel a feast of colour and picturesqueness ; gone, in the considerable towns at least, the haphazard accommodation for travellers, the overcrowded and verminous posadas, the unsophisticated service and the scanty fare. The frequent intercourse with strangers, too, has rubbed off some of the old-world bloom from the manners of the people. But,

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though the railways have scored deep lines upon the face of the land, they have left the districts untouched by them more conservative than ever in many things. Now that everybody travels by rail from one principal point to another, the habit of road travel has been lost, and the smaller towns of no special interest to tourists are more deserted than before. A few Catalan and French bagmen occasionally find their way to these places out of the beaten track of international travel ; but save for them, the roads are left to muleteers and wayfarers, such as those described in "Don Quixote" and seen by George Cayley and his friend more than fifty years ago. Again, doubtless, in Spain as elsewhere, the popularisation of the motor will in time bring the main diligence roads into use again by cultured travellers. But that, thank Heaven, is not likely to be just yet ; for the highways leave much to be desired from the motorist's point of view, and the posadas in the provinces will take many years to bring up to his ideal of a comfortable stopping-place.

It may be safely said that if at present any two young men similarly equipped to Cayley and his companion were to start out on a like expedition they might conceivably meet with adventures and discomforts of the same sort, and would assuredly find the places and people but little changed, except in the matter of costume. It is true that they would run smaller risk of attack from bandits, although even that danger in certain districts might be encountered, nor would it be so easy now as it appears to have been fifty years ago to make readers believe that you might kill a free-booter in the neighbourhood of a great Spanish city and escape pursuit or suspicion. Nor could the travellers, without the certainty of being apprehended for lunatics or stoned for buffoons, assume the theatrical get up adopted by the Englishmen in "Las Alforjas."

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But what is quite inconceivable is that two young English gentlemen of the present day, accustomed to rapid, luxurious transit and cleanly comfort, would voluntarily undergo the dirt, hardship, discomfort and delay which a journey over by-roads and bridle-tracks from one end of Spain to the other would even now necessarily entail. In the pursuit of sport, as it is called, it is true that even greater hardships are faced by gently nurtured Englishmen; but of sport as they understand it there is little to be had in Spain, especially by chance travellers; and poor fare and squalid surroundings do not commend themselves to our pampered generation. Quite recently I passed a time upon the road and in the small *pueblos*, far away from railways, in the ancient kingdom of Murcia, passing the nights often in lonely granges before the log fires, or in village posadas as primitive as those described by Cayley. And there was much talk there at the time of a certain daring *bandelero* who had an inconvenient habit of waylaying and robbing honest citizens on the road not far from Lorca. I can answer for it that if a pair of young Englishmen were to set forth, as Cayley and his friend did, with ponies and no guide, and were to ride, we will say, from Lorca through the ancient Moorish kingdom of Granada, by Velez Rubio, Baza, Guadix and Granada, to Motril on the Mediterranean, they would see as much local colour, wild scenery and rough accommodation as would last them in a general way for the rest of their lives, although they might not make so fine a book of their wanderings as George Cayley did. Indeed, for a good portion of the way the route of the earlier traveller might still be traversed without much alteration being found in the roadside inns or in the roads themselves. It is not, however, primarily as a guide-book that "The Bridle Roads of Spain" should be regarded. It

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deserves to be read as a little masterpiece of travel by any one upon whom the glamour of Spain has fallen ; and it was a happy thought to rescue it from the undeserved oblivion into which it had sunk. Personally I shall love it always for what it meant to me in those fast-fading days or my early youth, but it should charm others by the wit and brilliancy of its narrative and the unfailing vigour of its style.

MARTIN HUME.

LONDON, *April*, 1908.

RECOLLECTIONS
OF GEORGE JOHN CAYLEY

BY

LADY RITCHIE

AND

MRS. COBDEN SICKERT

I

THE first time I remember him was mounting a great stone staircase in an old palace at Naples. My father had been calling on Mrs. Craven—Pauline de la Ferronays—the friend of so many friends. We left her sitting by the wood fire burning in the great chimney-piece. She was dressed in white, a pale woman with smooth dark hair, looking thoughtfully into the smouldering flame. The room beyond was in twilight; it was rather solemn, with thick walls and carved ceilings and sad-coloured curtains, just lighted by the flicker from the burning logs. A servant met us in the anteroom to let us out, and the door had not closed when we saw George Cayley coming up the staircase—a rapid, fanciful figure wrapped in a cloak. He suddenly drew out a sword as he met us and stopped to speak to my father.

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“I am going to the fancy ball at the palace to-night,” he said, “and I am coming to show Mrs. Craven my sword.”

“Where did you get it from?” my father asked him, taking it into his own hand and admiring it.

“I made it myself,” the young man answered; “look at the chain—I am very proud of the chain,” and then, replacing it in its scabbard, he nodded, and passed through the door which had not yet shut, into the dim, dignified home of the Cravens.

Among the many pictures which hang up in one’s gallery of early impressions I have more than one fading sketch of my old friend. But when some one asked me who he was like, I could only think of some character in fiction, of Hamlet—Mercutio—Fantasio, perhaps, out of Alfred de Musset’s play. I could imagine George Cayley fishing for wigs as Fantasio did. How many strange objects he used to fish for, and what lovely things he used to bring to show us devised by his own hands and invented by himself! I can see those hands still, nervous, gentleman’s hands, the fingers scarred and stained with many experiments, with work on the anvil, with acids and varnishes. When we first met his dress was shabby and fanciful. Sometimes he had on a red cap like that one in the picture of Masaccio’s in the National Gallery. People wore their hair long in those days, almost as long as they did in Masaccio’s time. Mr. Cayley was not handsome, like Masaccio, but nevertheless, his was a striking appearance and a figure not to be overlooked; always to the front, propounding, speculating, alert, interested—his friends laughed at his whimsical theories and paradoxes, and loved his warm heart, and admired his gay, quick intuition.

We did not meet again for a year or two after that

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casual encounter at Naples. By that time I was a grown-up young lady going out with my father.

There was one special ball in Dover Street at Lady Stanley of Alderley's, into which he suddenly reappeared on his return from the war in the East, where he had gone out as special correspondent.

Lady Stanley stood receiving her guests, surrounded by her beautiful daughters. The great shining landing led to a shining ballroom; figures dressed (so it seemed to me) in radiance and light and crowned with flowers were flitting all about, and Mr. Cayley came up through the crowd. He told us he had only returned home that very day, and it was with the halo of unknown adventure and danger about him that he met us. His clothes were not quite the same as other people's clothes; he wore a loose black necktie which I dare say had been in battle with him. Everybody made him welcome, and all that evening he danced and talked and responded to his friends' greetings.

Whether in beautiful and dazzling scenes or in quiet little dining-rooms and studies, his talk was always the same, full of wit, full of gist. He would talk of to-day, of to-morrow, of yesterday, of feelings, of plans, with endless zest and with fancy. He used to preach little sermons to his partners as he stood up with them, to which they listened with reverence. He had a high, harsh voice, with a chord in it.

"There *is* such a thing as being true to oneself," I can still hear him say in a crowded back room in Chesham Place; "you must never forget that."

Mr. Cayley had given up fancy dress and foreign experiments by this time. He had made it all right with his family and come home to live in London. As I reopen

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this book of the past (it must have been published about the time of which I am writing), I can almost hear my old friend's voice, still speaking, dictating, suggesting, half in fun, all in earnest, sentence after sentence ringing like a happy chime of youth—each sentence is as if he were speaking still.

Take for instance: "Man is a practical animal with a few romantic aspirations which affect his thoughts much more than his actions. The romance of every man's life consists, not half so much in what he does, or has done, as in what he thinks of doing, or thinks he might have done." Or again: "There are Pyramuses and Thisbes, who peep at each other through opera glasses instead of through holes in the wall, and Romeos and Juliets, who meet, whether at Devonshire House or the Whittington Club Balls, and love just as suddenly, desperately, and fatally." How true it all is, how gay, how experienced! Or again: "I have always looked upon *Pickwick* (which will live as Dickens's great work) as a free translation or *Don Quixote* into the manners of modern England. Mr. *Pickwick*, in the simple enthusiasm of his heart, resolves to be the redresser of grievances. Sam Weller, the shrewd and humorous valet, is the natural Sancho of British low life; always ready, like his prototype, with a quaint and homely, common-sense view, to contrast with the flighty visions of his master. Jingle is Gines de Pasamonte, Wardle the hospitable sylvan duke. . . ."

George Cayley used to come and dine with us in Onslow Square, and question and contradict my father and interest him and amuse him. His own father, Mr. Edward Stillingfleet Cayley, a widower, was a Yorkshireman, a landowner, belonging to an ancient family, and a member of Parliament. Mr. Cayley used to live in

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Dean's Yard, Westminster, and we were sometimes asked to dine there. I do not know who was actually dwelling in the house besides George and his elder brother ; I have an impression that Lord Strangford, then Mr. Smythe, lived there too. I remember the hall with half a dozen hats hanging up ; there was a little snug back room with a bright fire and invitations stuck all over the chimney-piece ; a drawing-room upstairs also looking very comfortable, with its bookcases and its plaster casts, and armchairs round the fire, and a table with books and a reading-desk. Mr. Cayley *père* was standing at the door to receive us, a tall, thin, hook-nosed gentleman with very white hair, very dignified and polite. Lady Charlotte Locker was sitting on the sofa.

I remember Mr. Cayley the elder welcoming my father with great courtesy and saying : "I leave everything to George ; he invites my guests and arranges everything ; he arranged the dinner table, as you will see ; it is all his doing."

That little dinner party begins again, as I think of it. Lady Charlotte Locker sits by Mr. Cayley—it is all rather dull and supremely delightful—George Cayley does not hold forth in his father's presence, it is the others who talk. He becomes somewhat absorbed and preoccupied with details, like Martha ; for the moment the Mary in him is absent. When we left it was the father who insisted on seeing us to the carriage : "Don't you come out, George," he said to his son.

I kept a diary in those days, where all these minute details were noted, and among other things I see that after dinner Lady Charlotte Locker told me that Mr. Edward Cayley's father and mother had both been born deaf and dumb.

In that same old house under the Abbey towers, where

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the chimes and the bells are part of the daily life, and the people are to be seen as they go crossing Dean's Yard on their way to and from the cloisters, where any day you may meet the cheerful stream of Westminster boys pouring out to their games, the Cayleys went on living long after the kind old father's death. George, meanwhile, had married a very young bride, Miss Wilmot, a cousin of his own, and three little children were born to them as the years went by. Sir John Millais once painted a charming picture of the elder boy, and received in return a beautiful silver tray with dolphin handles worked for him by George Cayley himself, whose silver work was very striking and beautiful. Some of it is like the modern archaic work, only with more grace and finish. Once (still in my youth) I remember that at some dinner everyone was speaking of a marvellous find, an antique silver ornament of uncertain date, over which people were speculating. Mrs. Norton was sitting opposite to me and she looked down slowly and smiled. "There is no uncertainty," she said; "I recognise the work of our friend George Cayley," and then everybody laughed, and agreed that she was right.

Our last visit to the Cayleys' old house in Dean's Yard was a sad one. My sister and I had driven to the steps of the terrace on which it stands, to ask for one of the boys who was very ill. The door was opened by George Cayley himself, who had seen us from the window. It was a dark winter's evening just before Christmas, and the mists were everywhere.

"Come in," he said with a sigh, "come in, and share our dismal jollity. Artie is very ill, there is hardly any hope for him, but he wanted to see the Christmas-tree lighted up, and so we are having it to-night instead of waiting for Christmas."

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We followed him upstairs to the drawing-room, where the tree was beginning to shine with its candles, the two other children were excitedly running to and fro, little Artie was lying back on his pillows between his mother and his nurse; and then George Cayley, with the tears streaming down his cheeks, went on steadily lighting the candles and looking to it all. Little Artie was smiling faintly, the children still running round and round the little tree, when we left. I remember the sad look of the lighted windows as we drove away and looked back at the house.

It is now thirty years since George Cayley himself died after a long illness courageously endured. The *Times* obituary for October 15, 1878, ran thus:—

“On the 11th October, at Munton Rectory, Kent, George John Cayley, second son of the late Edward Stillingfleet Cayley, Esq., M.P., of Wydale, York, aged 52.”

ANNE THACKERAY RITCHIE.

II

GEORGE CAYLEY'S personality was brilliant, original, and many-sided. To seek his society was to court surprise, for he was eccentric and conventional, steadfast and capricious, made up of contradictions. He was a wayward philosopher. Those whom he admitted to intimacy found themselves in the wittiest, the most resourceful, the finest company. It is true that, like most persons of strong individuality, if he could attract he could also repel: otherwise, how should Nature protect her favourites against besieging hordes of curious mediocrity?

One after another those who knew George Cayley are

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following him out of the world. When all who knew him are gone, what memory will survive of his charm, powerful and evanescent, what shadow of the substance that once was he?

The writer of these lines has been asked to put into a few words her recollections of him as he was in long past days. Such recollections tend rather to visualise than to become articulate. They are intangible, they come and go, they evoke a sigh or a smile, and behold! they have taken another shape or have vanished!

There must still be some who knew him in other aspects than were familiar to the three sisters who, so long ago, were his young neighbours in Algiers, one of whom now endeavours to record—however faintly—the vivid mental vision they all three retain of him.

The three sisters were in Algiers one winter and spring, in a house in the Village d'Isly at the end of the Ravines. Close by, gardens and walls, gates and lane between, was an almost empty house awaiting the wandering occupants of its vacant rooms. One day the first comers were idling on their verandah, when up the garden walk came a little girl—the blue Mediterranean was background to the small figure in white pinafore and hat with daisies round the crown; in both arms, very tightly, she clasped an empty wine bottle. Demurely she came towards the strangers, her eyes fixed upon them. When she was close to them she held out the bottle and asked to have it filled with fresh water. One of the sisters carried it home for her, and there in the next house was the newly-returned family—Mr. Cayley and his wife, their little son, the tiny daughter. The water supply of one house was as good as that of the other: the little messenger had been despatched on a diplomatic mission to report upon the neighbours.

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The family of four had spent the summer in the island of Majorca ; they had sailed away from Algiers with part of their furniture and their three big Spanish donkeys. On the island they had sparsely furnished an empty house ; they had lived sometimes in tents, riding their donkeys from camping ground to camping ground. Now, with their furniture and the donkeys, they had come back to their house in Algiers. Whilst they were settling in was opportunity for friendly relations to grow up between them and their neighbours.

If fairy gold may turn to dry leaves, there are dry leaves that in some hands turn to gold. Mr. Cayley took the common things of every day and made of them adventure and romance.

The two families met early and late. It, by some mischance, there were tiffs in the morning, before the morning ended there were meetings to explain away the foundationless "bad dreams." With Mr. Cayley their neighbours often rode the Spanish donkeys ; at first were inexpert at sitting a pack, fell off and rose from the dusty ground to mount again, perhaps to fall again. The riders climbed the steep, paved, narrow Arab lanes ; they sat their steeds and drank coffee at the Arab coffee-houses found here and there in lovely out-of-the-way places ; they listened while Mr. Cayley, in Arabic, exchanged greetings with the coffee-makers ; they halted on the Roman bridge to look long at the red river that flowed under it and curved and turned and was lost in yet another bend. The river flowed not with water, but with red anemones. (The red river flows no longer, it is said ; the neighbours have not been back to see.) Then on again over the sunlit ridges and down into the shadows of the valleys—for thus the land lay in a region beyond the heights of Mustapha

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—and so over many ridges and into many valleys. The riders came home at eve counting height and depth as day and night—to rest after a week of travelling, or so they said.

At the simple entertainments that in those days were given in Algiers, Mr. Cayley might be seen or he might not. If he were in the mood he went, if he were not he stayed away; he indulged his moods and made no effort to control them. Whether he went or not, he wished his neighbours to go, and if he stopped at home he liked them to come back and tell him who was there and what was said. If, when they returned, lights were still burning in the *Maison Cayley*, the neighbours tapped on the glass and entered through the window, to be given supper of bread and Majorca cheese and wine. Mr. Cayley did not despise gossip or discourage it; but it must be short and to the point, and by no means of necessity charitable. He was amused by what went on around him, by the little dramas in real life played before him or told to him.

Once he acted "*Petruchio*"; once he coached his neighbours in their parts. He had a taste for costume, especially for the costume of any country he was in. In Algiers he often wore some modification of Arab dress, which became him very well. So clothed he could be seen hammering metal—gold, silver or brass—into strange, beautiful shapes. He might then talk delightfully to a visitor or he might be silent, replying, if reply he did, by a shrug, a lifted eyebrow, a mouth half opened for a moment, and, on second thoughts, shut to and nothing said. Sometimes his gates were closed against all comers—perhaps the family had colds, and on the gates was pinned a notice that "*Toute la famille Cayley est très malade; on est prié de ne pas entrer.*"

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Mr. Cayley had a wide knowledge of literature, and was apt at quotation, and yet his neighbours do not associate him very specially with books. He had seen many places, known many people in many lands. Most of the distinguished people of his day had been his friends. But he did not dwell in reminiscence, and of the dead the names with which his neighbours chiefly associate him are those of Mrs. Norton, Thackeray, Stirling-Maxwell, Monckton Milnes. Nor do the neighbours remember that he dealt much in anecdote—they recall one: out in the Crimea a wounded soldier dying close to him in the trenches and bidding farewell to a comrade:—"It's all cold cawfee with me, Jim," and no other word spoken. It was as a correspondent that George Cayley was in the Crimea, for what paper his neighbours know not. On the Conservative side he had fought and lost an election at Scarborough; he had travelled far; he had lived in a tomb by the Nile. He was man of the world, citizen of the world; he was part Bohemian, part conventional. He had pride of birth, the prejudices of an aristocrat; these were tempered by contempt for the fool wherever placed, by immense appreciation of genius, talent, capacity wherever found. For humanity in the mass he had scant respect; he was, on the other hand, tender towards the individual gifted by Nature upon whom Fortune frowned. From George Cayley such an one would get sympathy and advice, intelligent and practical. A younger son who had pursued no career of money, all his life, he had very little. With what he had he was open-handed.

He was witty, he was bitter; he was keen and sometimes cruel in his judgments. He was never in a hurry and he was never idle. If he did not like you he was not very kind; if he liked you he had always time to give you; if

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he liked you he could make every hour of the day seem worth a hundred days without him.

How hard it is to crystallise into words the remembrance in which his long-ago neighbours hold him ! What things tangible have come down to them from him ? A pot he turned upon the wheel, a brooch, a comb, a bracket, verses.

For a few more years the Cayleys lived in Algiers. They moved to another house above the Fontaine Bleue. That house was of Moorish architecture, with a Moorish garden. There was an outer court, rooms built round the inner court, flat roof above. Mr. Cayley as long as it was possible—longer, it might almost be said—played tennis in the outer court, the “*jeu de paume*.” His health failed surely, if slowly. He bore the gradual loss of physical power with stoic fortitude, ignoring it as far as might be ; of sympathy he would have none. A friend of earlier days bidding him what proved to be a last farewell, betrayed more emotion than was due to an ordinary parting that might once more have been only the prologue to their next meeting. George Cayley said, “*Ah, I see you know that I am dying.*” He started to return to Algiers, and died on the way, in Kent, at the house of a relative.

“*The Bridle Roads of Spain*” has been for many years lost to the knowledge of the public, but there have always been a few who prized it ; a few from time to time have discovered it ; now and then strangers have fraternised over their common knowledge of it. This book of his is said by an authority to be of the very spirit and essence of Spain—to the three neighbours it seems of the very essence and spirit of George Cayley.

E. M. COBDEN SICKERT.

A FAREWELL SONNET

(TO OUR NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOURS.)

Till you are gone, and your small cloud of smoke
Grows pale and paler while our eyes pursue,
Till the horizon blots you all in blue,
We shall not know how bitter is the stroke
Of parting. For the threadbare Spartan cloak
Muffles from touch as well as veils from view,
Slight wounds alike, and such as through and through
Would rip us were we armour-plated oak.
A weary sense of loss to eye and ear,
And all the doors and windows of the mind ;
A silence of familiar voices kind
That heralded familiar faces dear.
So dull dim distance closes cold and blind
Between us and who knows what hope or fear.

G. J. C.

(Written with the first ink out of the bequeathed bottle.)

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LAS ALFORJAS

BY
GEORGE JOHN CAYLEY

AUTHOR OF SIR REGINALD MOHUN



C. STEVENS. SCULP.

*Con todo eso dijo el Don
Juan sera bien leer la, pues no
hay libro tan malo que no tenga
alguna cosa buena D.ⁿ Q.^{te}*

LONDON
1853

RICHARD BENTLEY NEW BURLINGTON S.

DEDICATION

LOVE hath an idle industry :
And foolish lovers fondly trace
The name they love in any place ;
Nor stay to think how brief may be
The record of such registry.

They carve sequestered woodland boles
Where solitude and silence reign :
They scar the hostel window-pane,
To shake when any brawler trolls
His ribald catch to careless souls :

Or wandering where with sullen roar
The vexed sea-bosom maketh moan—
Deep-murmuring echo of their own—
They linger in the sand to score
The name they love along the shore.

And yet they know the tree shall grow,
Till tortured characters forswear
Their legend : glass, though marked with care,
Shall break : they know the tide shall flow,
And leave the sand as smooth as snow.

Dedication

So, MABEL, on the first of these
Ephemeral leaves, at random ta'en
From scented coppice-wolds of Spain,
I trace thy name, my heart to please—
And trust them to the idle breeze!

The breeze of fashion fluttering by—
Which often sports with flimsy toys,
And makes a busy murmuring noise
'Mid rustling leaves that yearly die—
May let them fall or make them fly.

What if such foliage flew or fell—
It could but last a little while :
And, whether fortune frown or smile,
The first of these light leaves shall tell—
I care not whom—I love thee well!

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

WHEN you have made a mistake, generally the worst thing you can do is to enter into explanations ; and when anybody begins with saying that something is generally inexpedient, you may be sure that he is, individually, and by special exception, going to do it himself. The reader will at once perceive that the Author of these pages, having rashly published a first, is now (perhaps still more rashly) about to apologise in a second edition.

His work has met with, perhaps, more than its due proportion of literary notice, in which, as is usual, it has been praised and blamed for the same things by different critics. Under these circumstances, the Author would have been content to adopt the old expedient of accepting the praise and ignoring the blame, if there had not been one grave charge reiterated alike by reprovers and commenders (by these as “a serious blemish, which we the more regret from the many excellences,” &c. ; by those as the head and front of offending)—namely, the “unscrupulous mixture of truth and fiction, which would mar a better book than,” &c.

The Author takes this opportunity of assuring the intelligent and perspicacious reader, that he had no intention whatever of misleading him. He thought that, to the

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intelligent reader, the book would sufficiently explain its own plan, and indicate what was truth and how much fiction by subtle lines of demarcation not intended to catch the eye and arouse the suspicions of the careless and credulous.

The result was, one more illustration of the danger of too hasty and general classifications. The intelligent were not vigilant enough, and the credulous not blind enough, for the Author's purpose. The critic (whose course through the wastes of light literature is often kangaroo-like) overlooked and overleapt all the cunning countersigns intended to warn him where a toil was spread for the unwary. When the Author steps modestly forward, in a foot note, to disentangle the meshes and beg pardon, it is too late. The critic has taken offence, and refusing to be comforted, lays about him, tearing the flimsy fabric in pieces, like the bee in this fable by Loqman el hakim.

THE SPIDER AND THE BEE.

An ingenious little spider had spread her nets amid the tall rank stalks of certain weeds that grew over the remnant of a carcass. The lion had left it to the wolves, the wolves to the vultures, and the vultures to the flies, which last were still buzzing in countless swarms among the putrid bones. Many were already caught in the toils, when a brisk young bee came booming across the wilderness, who, when he heard the collective buzzing, mistook it for the hum of his own tribe. He at once plunged into the weed-clump to look for flowers, and became entangled in the cobwebs. These he was indignantly demolishing, when the spider thus accosted him :—

“Oh vagrant son of the hive—an evil hour hath borne thee hither ! wherefore didst thou not stay to observe that

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these be base weeds barren of honey, and these slender toils woven for foolish flies! Now, thou hast rent my poor web, and set free my legitimate prey, while thy blustering outcries have alarmed the frivolous race on which I make my living, so that now, on thy departure, I may mend my broken nets in vain." But the bee answered—"Out upon thee, mother of snares! Let this warn thee not to catch bees any more; and be thankful thou hast escaped my sting." "Had I meant to catch bees," she replied, "I would have spun my nets of stronger line, and spread them among flowers. I trusted to the wisdom of bees for my safety, as I did to the folly of flies for my subsistence." So the bee flew away in great dudgeon; and when the spider had mended her web, the flies (who would never have found it out for themselves) were aware of the danger, and left the spider to starve.

This fable is, of course, no more to be found in the original Arabic than the "Cronica de los Sultanes de Granada, por el Sabio Abou Kizeb" (father of lies), p. 216.

The Author, being very much in the position of an unfortunate wit, who has made an elaborate joke which a prosaic company, taking it (as the French say) "at the foot of the letter," are inclined to consider a perversion of facts, will now, with the best grace he can, relinquish his unsuccessful attempt at pleasantry, in the hope of rescuing, at least, his impeached veracity.

Entertaining what he believes to be a very common opinion, that the books of readable travel offered to the public were usually more indebted to the embroidering needle of fiction than the loom and shuttle of fact; and giving the British public credit for a general curiosity about manufactures of all sorts, the Author conceived the idea of

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writing a book of ordinarily accurate modern travel, which should expose to the reader the process by which such books are generated, and the relative proportion of truth and fiction which they contain. He proposed to show how a seed of suggestion, picked up by the way side, germinated in the note-book, and finally expanded in printed leaves of florid narrative.

Man is a practical animal, with a few romantic aspirations which affect his thoughts much more than his actions. The romance of every man's life consists, not half so much in what he does or has done, as in what he thinks of doing, or thinks he might have done. We were two gentlemen of letters travelling through Spain, and our original plan was to write two parallel streams of narrative, in which the companion of the present Author was to tell what we did ; and the present Author himself relate, as verisimilarly as possible, what we thought of doing and thought we might have done. If this plan had been carried into effect, it might have proved a curiosity to the loungers of literature behind the scenes ; but what would the public in front of the footlights have thought of Siamese-twin Authors flatly contradicting one another in parallel columns ?

The fabulist would practically have had no chance at all. But the veracious *collaborateur* was prevented by circumstances from appearing. The decorating artist, being thus left alone, at first thought of writing both the plain and adorned himself, and setting them side by side. But the crooked cannot run evenly with the straight. He found that he could not write fiction so entertaining that it would bear constant contradiction, and he compromised the matter by taking the main line of truth for his general narrative, and indulging in occasional diversions, which (set off by the confession of his being an embellishing Author, with occa-

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sional hints and inuendoes not conspicuous enough to frighten the careless skimmer) he hoped would be at once perceived and understood by the critic as illustrations of his modified original scheme.

It appears he was mistaken. His manner of relating real and imaginary events is accused by the reviewers as so uniform, that they were unsuspectingly led at first to believe several cock-and-bull stories, which the Author a few pages subsequent confesses to be such ; and they are afterwards led to disbelieve other stories which they cannot satisfactorily make out whether he means to vouch for or discredit. The real mistake was not having made a general prefatory confession (which nobody would have read), a fault he is now rectifying in the second edition, by a candid avowal which will, at any rate, ease his literary conscience ; and if, as he hopes, no one reads it before reading the book, it will do no harm. Towards this desirable end he has made his preface rather long and tedious ; and is now about to hide his confessions in the midst of an interminable paragraph. The first idea of the scheme of the work arose from the scene in the water-colour shop (p. 45). The first instance of pure invention is the Legend of Beaucaire (p. 52). Then there is that terrible catastrophe of the slaughtered robber, which is true up to the point of hearing the pistol report in the *dehesa*, and the Author's imagination accounting for the report (p. 122). "Still the shot had to be accounted for. Has your imagination prepared you for something dreadful ? Mine had ! *Something like what follows.*" Observe, only *something like*, and all those italics to put the wary reader on his guard. In the original draught this letter was followed by a postscript, exposing the many points of extreme improbability which the most casual reader must detect in the story, and explaining the fact, which was thus :—In his

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sudden pursuit of the ponies, the Author had carried away all the pipe-lights. The redoubtable brigand-slayer Harry was exercising his *matchless* prowess in blank cartridge practice at the end of his cigar, which he succeeded in lighting at the expense of his companion's vivid apprehensions. This postscript was suppressed from bibliopolical motives, against the Author's better judgment, and the hint that, after all, it might not be really true (vol. i. p. 214, 1st edition), was slipped in afterwards, a sop to conscience, and as bank-notes are sent by surreptitious penitents to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The story of Joshua (p. 177), who had cheated one of the faithful in the sale of a bewitched donkey, is an invention; though it is true that we found the prison, following a fair daughter of Israel carrying relief to her father. Of course, the Lady Jane in muleteer's costume is an imaginary sketch: it arose from a conversation on the possibility of travelling, as we were doing, in married life. The beggar on assback was a real man, and the Author did earnestly advocate robbing him, but could not persuade his companion to enlist in the undertaking. The only other acknowledged fabrication is the monomaniac planter of onions and lath crosses at Coca. But there are a number of what might seem, to the careless reader, to be narrations, which are, in fact, nothing more than suggestions of what *might have happened*. The extravagant buccaneering expedition (p. 165); the imaginary imprisonment (p. 203); and the theoretical robbery of two British clergymen, all related as what might have happened, are surely not to be quoted against the work as clumsy attempts to deceive, throwing discredit by implication on all the rest of it, which, with the palpable and self-evident exceptions specified, is strictly faithful to the fact. In conclusion, the Author hopes and trusts that, after this

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full and minute, though not improbably or undesignedly tedious account of exceptional instances, his word may be taken for the strict, literal, and unvarnished truth of the remainder.

The Bridle Roads of Spain

CHAPTER I

ON Thursday, October 16th, of the year of the Great Exhibition, I embarked at the Waterloo station, where I booked myself through to Paris for two-and-twenty shillings.

The carriage was full of foreigners. Opposite me was a young German, by a curious coincidence, also on the way to Spain. He was going by Lisbon, and I by Barcelona. I begged him to call on me as he passed through Seville in the winter ; but, separating at Southampton for our several packets, we forgot to exchange names.

At Southampton—which we reached about midnight—we were rattled down in an omnibus to the pier. Here we had to pay harbour dues, amounting to twopence each individual, and a penny each package.

A Frenchman who had been a fortnight in London, and had not an atom of luggage, made great outcries at having to pay his twopence.

“Mais c'est infâme ! Comment deux pence—puisque je n'ai point de bagages—absolument rien ! 'Cré coquin de pays où l'on fait tout payer, même les choses qui n'existent pas, 'cristie !”

Perfide Albion

I explained to him that it was for *himself*, not any “*effets suppositifs*”; and consoled him with the reflection that the most Spartanese traveller must at least carry a body about with him; and it ought not to vex his spirit having to pay twopence for so important a vehicle, for, after all, twopence was not a heavy *ad valorem* duty.

I met him again on deck. He was a hard-featured, weather-beaten man. One of his eyes opened wider than the other, with a ludicrous, half-fierce, half-bewildered expression. His shirt was curiously dirty, even by the light of the fusee with which he lit a cigarette I made for him to calm his nerves. He approved of the Exhibition, and said he had occupied himself in it going “*ça et là pour voir ce qu'il y avait de curieux ; car le pays n'est pas amusant.*” He could not speak a word of English, and had the impression that everybody wanted to cheat him.

There is a theory wherein the wisdom of our ancestors is supposed to dwell, that much virtue lies between the sheets of a bed, and that at all hazards travellers should undress before they attempt to sleep. To me it would appear that there is neither comfort nor amusement in the taking off and putting on of garments (unless these functions are intercalated by a satisfactory means of general ablution, which on a steamer is not the case), but much the contrary.

Again, where the beds are coffins, and the sheets about the breadth and texture of long-towelling, there is a difficulty in keeping the narrow strip of bedclothes balanced on one's knees and shoulders. The coarse sheets, especially, show a strong constitutional tendency to revert to their proper destination, converting themselves into tightly-twisted cables, and writhing themselves round their victim, who, if he be a person of classical imagination, dreams he is

Laocoon in a Berth

a childless Laocoon in a cold climate, and wakes up at once stifled and chilled.

The prejudice against sleeping dressed has doubtless come down to us, by tradition, from days when dress was much tighter and more uncomfortable than in these loose and easy days of long waistcoats and tweed shooting-jackets.

Having made these reflections, I took off my shoes, buttoned the straps of my trousers to prevent them ruckling up, put my feet into the sleeves of my great-coat, whose skirts I turned up over my knees, spread my plaid over all, and went to sleep.

CHAPTER II

Friaay, October 17.

IT was a fine sunshiny morning. We got into Havre at a quarter to ten. I immediately went ashore and breakfasted, leaving my portmanto to its fate.

Returning from breakfast in about half an hour, my portmanto was still on the deck, unmoved and immovable. I told the douaniers that I must have my *malle*, for I was going off by the eleven o'clock train. They shrugged their shoulders and said it was impossible. The luggage would not be looked over till two o'clock—that it was not their fault if the boat came too late to catch the train.

Knowing that the most formidable of French impossibilities are always routable by a charge of cavalry, I got a boat, and succeeded—not without a considerable amount of personal exertion and blustering—in getting my portmanto on shore before the departure of the eleven o'clock train—too late, however, to be registered ; and I was hurried into my carriage with some misgivings, though the porter said he would put it in. I was aware that in France nothing can be done without the greatest amount of absurd and useless formality, and that they are always determined to protect you, whether you think the risk worth the inconvenience of the remedy or not ; but it seemed too monstrous that they should separate a man from his luggage, merely because the registry had closed.

A Detruncation

When, in the front rank of an anxious crowd, I rushed to those awful folding portals whereover is written *DISTRIBUTION DE BAGAGES* (but where should be written, *LASCIATE OGNI SPERANZA, VOI CHE NON REGISTRATE*), I waited there with agonising sensations, and saw, through the grating, trunk after trunk, and valise after valise, and every other sort of luggage, borne in on the shoulders of brawny and blousy porters. It came not. I made my complaint. It would come by the next train, five in the morning. I signed my name in a book—sighed, and sallied forth.

It was about six. The night was falling fast. I had intended to go direct to the Lyons railway, and take up my night's quarters at some neighbouring hostel. That was now impossible, so I put into the *Hôtel de Normandie*, close to the station—hired an apartment—rolled up my great-coat, with the revolver and three rouleaux of nine Napoleons each, put up in separate fingers cut off an old glove, in its pockets—stuffed the bundle into a closet, locked the door, and went forth into the night, bearing with me the key of my arsenal, treasury, and wardrobe.

I dined—called on a friend in the *Boulevard des Italiens*, and asked him where I could get water-colours.

Following his directions, I went to the *Place de la Bourse*.

I was some time selecting my paints and brushes. The shopman, a smart young democrat, seemed to take no interest whatever in selling his wares. Probably he was the prodigal son of the establishment, with a fixed income. He seemed, "not to put too fine a point on it," intensely bored, and ever and anon would ejaculate, *sotto voce*, "Oh, mon Dieu, est-il possible!" At last I finished my selection of paints, and began to try the points of the brushes.

A Brush with the Enemy

This overcame his last detachment of patience, and he said,—

“ Oh ciel ! les pinceaux ne sont pas long à choisir !!! ”

“ Il me paraît que je vous ennuie ? ”

“ Un peu, vraiment ! ”

“ Comme ce n'est que pour vous distraire, monsieur, dans vos moments de loisir que j'achète ces objets, et comme il m'est parfaitement indifférent qu'ils soient bien ou mal choisis, je continuerai avec délibération l'accomplissement de mon affaire. ”

This speech acted, of course, as a declaration of war. Amid much violence and undiplomatic language, I withdrew the golden ambassador I held in my hand ready to drop into his capital. He, on the other hand, undid my parcel and put each particular paint in its place, under the glass counter, with a flourish ; making an extra flourish with the vermilion—I suppose by way of expressing his political preference for that hue.

Thus I *should* have lost my only chance of being able to make any water-colour drawings in Spain (for there are no materials to be bought in the country, says the infallible Mr. Ford), had I spoken as I have written.

Instead of this, at the point where he delivered himself or the apophthegm “ that paint-brushes were not things that took long to choose, ” I reflected that the poor young man was probably in love, or had a headache, or an appointment, or had been recently reproved by his parents. Therefore, though I composed the little speech in my head, and had it ready in case my patience should happen to give way, I managed to keep it to myself, and went on with a specious calmness choosing my brushes, and at length, paying my money, departed in peace ; I doubt not with the young man's blessing. Nay, also with his alms, for in his haste to

Saturn at a Discount

be rid of me, I think he gave me about a franc too much change. However, out of pity for his weariness, and as the paints were quite dear enough as it was, I did not trouble him with restoring it.

I now wandered about, and travelled a considerable distance, attempting to steer by the stars; but, though in former days I used to know the *quartier* between the Seine and the Boulevard pretty well, after about an hour I came unexpectedly on the Place de la Bourse again.

There was a man with a great telescope planted on the pavement.

“Approchez-vous, messieurs ! Saturne avec son anneau ! vingt-cinq centimes !”

I had a look at the dull old grandfather of the planets trudging his weary round through space, with his broad baldrick slanting across his shoulder. A cold bath at the Bains Chinois took the day's dust off me on my way home to the hotel, where I straitly charged the *concierge* to call me betimes.

CHAPTER III

Saturday, October 18.

AT a little before six I went over the way to the station.

The stars were shining. Orion was high in the southern heaven, and bright-eyed Sirius hunting at his heel. The Twins were almost in the zenith, and the moon within her own breadth of Mars.

I was just in time to see my lost one pulled out of the luggage-van ; and, after surmounting several impossibilities, I set off in a *citadine* for the Lyons railway-station.

Dawn was grizzling the beard of night (by the way, night is classically an old woman ; but what of that, since some old women have beards?) as I mounted my vehicle : and as my jaded and superannuated cart-horse stumbled along the Boulevard, broad streaks of light rose horizontally, as if Phœbus was drawing up his Venetian blinds.

At last he put his head out of his window ; and the first of his beams fell on the brazen mountebank who cuts his continual caper and blows his own trumpet on the column of the Bastille.

Having deposited my luggage at the foot of a wood column, and having taken advice of the railway authorities as to the train to go by, I found I had just three hours and three-quarters to get my breakfast in. It was during the long blank interval which succeeded my meal that I be-

Stationary and the Book-Trade

thought me of a certain little book, seven inches by four—prepared paper—lead point. I sought my portmanto at the foot of the pillar, brought the volume back to the *Café du Chemin de Fer de Lyon*, and began this history of my travels.

I began it in the hope it might be an amusement to myself, and a safety-valve for the observations I am accustomed to pour into the ears of my travelling companion, when I have one. But it proved more trouble to write than I expected, and, on looking over, seemed deplorably dull. Let us hope it will look rather better in print.

Moreover, I found an agreeable and instructive fellow-passenger in Major Rawlinson, the arrow-headed character. He almost persuaded me to become an Assyrian, and go out to Bagdad instead of Seville, which, if I had done, the reader should have had an abstruse treatise on

THE VNIFORM CVNEIFORM;

OR,

ALL THE ALPHABETS OF THE WORLD FROM THE ARROWHEAD.

By RANDOM SHOTT, F.R.S.

instead of this transpicuous volume, which those that run may read.

The recital of my exceedingly ordinary and unimportant adventures has therefore slumbered for a few days.

The railway took us as far as Châlons, whence the Saône steamer carried us forward and placed us to the debit of the city of Lyons.

In Lyons they did not take me, like Lord Chatham, “to see where the Rhone and the Saone, different as they are,

Rhone and Saone

meet at last." And if they had, it would have been of little use, as we arrived in the dusk of evening, and went away by the early twilight of dawn.

I could see, however, that Lyons was a very remarkable town ; and as we ran rapidly along the deep gorge by which the Saone enters the city, where houses with bright windows seemed perched among the dark masses of rock, the bell of our steamboat, which kept ringing incessantly, awoke a garrulous society of shifting echoes.

The Rhone below Lyons begins to grow gradually from picturesque to striking, and from that to sublime. The hills become larger and ruggeder, and their grey rocks are clothed with the bronzed and tawny verdure of autumnal-tinted vineyards. Valence, Rochemaure, and Viviers are striking places ; the Côte-d'Or, Ventou, &c., are respectable mountains ; and further down the real Alps themselves, which I had never seen before, lifted their snowy summits far away to the left. It seems to me a much finer river than the Rhine.

We performed our voyage in a lean, gaunt, sheet-iron mammoth, 420 feet long, gorged with boxes, and barrels, and bales of all sizes and shapes. We were ill-accommodated, and charged dear. This great river-serpent dragged its slow length along to Avignon, where we dined, but saw little of the place, except the Saracenic-looking walls, and the *coup d'œil* from the train. The railway carried us in three or four hours to Marseilles, where Major R. was just in time to start for his caliphate in Bagdad by the Constantinople steamer.

CHAPTER IV

PERPIGNAN, *October 28.*

MARSEILLES is a polyphylic, cosmopolitan, picturesque seaport, varied with every costume, and smelling of everything in the world, but especially garlic.

Having nothing on earth to do, I went and sat on the endmost post of the pier at the left jaw of the square basin, to enjoy the beauty of the weather, and admire the bright blue waters of the Mediterranean, as the sunlit sails scudded over it hither and thither. This is the first time I have seen it. We are aware its shores are empires.

There were a good many fruit-stalls along the quays, and I ate a few dozen figs, which did not at all spoil my appetite for dinner; after which I wrote letters home, and made up my mind not to go to Barcelona by steamboat.

On the morrow, at noon, I set off for Perpignan, taking my place, as I supposed, all the way. But I was swindled by the *administrateur*—a most amiable, civil man,—who gave me a Corsican contraband cigar.

I had to retrace my trams on the railway as far as Tarascon, which is more than half-way back to Avignon.

At Tarascon there was an interval of a mile or two in omnibuses, and we crossed the Rhone by a suspension-bridge. Tarascon has a fine old castle, now used as a prison. On the opposite bank is Beaucaire, with its rival fortress. In the days of Bertrand du Guesclin, the

Tarascon and Beaucaire

respective lords of these strongholds were at deadly feud. Olivier de Beaucaire, a sly old fox, succeeded at last in entrapping the gay young baron of Tarascon ; and, while he kept him a prisoner, and continual boats were crossing and re-crossing the Rhone with negotiations for the exorbitant ransom demanded, the captive managed to captivate the heart of Mademoiselle Beaucaire. She, of course, let him out by an underground passage. They were married ; their heir inherited both baronies ; and the castle of Beaucaire fell into premature decay. I wonder whether the prisoners of the period at Tarascon make love to the jailer's daughter. Old François de Rastaignac, from whom I have this legend, adds : "Entre ces beaulx chasteaulx il y avoit aultrefoys une rude chayne ; et on faisoit force octroyes, ostant maintes foys les meilleurs barrycqs de ce bon vin du Costé d'or, que tant aymaient les pyeux prestres d'Avignon."¹ I found his quaint old chronicle on a book-stall in Narbonne, and might have bought it for two francs and a half, if it had not been too bulky a folio to carry all through the Peninsula and back.

The run by rail from Beaucaire to Montpellier, along the side of a broad and fertile valley full of olives and orange-groves, with rocky hills in the distance, all brought out by the slanting beams of sunset, was very pretty and pleasant.

The summer which left England about two months before me is now decidedly overtaken. Leaving Montpellier in the *banquette*, which is the windiest place in the diligence, and wrapping myself up for a considerable change in temperature after sundown, I was too hot in the night.

¹ "Between these fair castles there was of old a stout chain, and they exercised a considerable tallage, abstracting often the best barrels of that good wine of Côte d'Or, which the pious priests of Avignon so loved."

Narbonne

In Béziers I had to wait from half-past four to six in the morning for a change of carriages, and got a little sleep on the marble slab of a café-table. The new carriage proved a wretched rattletrap ; and it turned out that I was booked no further than Narbonne.

What was worse than the “disgrace and dishonour” of being taken in, was “the infinite loss” of time ; for it arrived ten minutes too late to catch the diligence for Perpignan, and I had in consequence to wait ten hours in Narbonne.

I amused myself prowling about among the Roman remains heaped in great quantities in the Museum Gardens. There is a fine church, too—especially the inside—stone roof and handsome columns. It is hung with a quantity of wretched daubs, which my informant (a sea-captain, lately from the Gambia river, who made my acquaintance on the strength of his knowing a little English, and who was kind enough to show me about the place) assured me were principally by Rubens.

The streets were here and there blocked up by great wine-presses, which, as they were screwed down, gushed with purple spouts into all sorts of tubs, and jars, and pannikins. I got more grapes for two sous than I could eat ; excellent grapes too.

At eight o'clock, very weary of Narbonne, I set off for Perpignan, which I reached at two in the morning, and went to bed.

Next morning I wandered about the town, and up to the citadel. I inquired for the commandant, and was shown into the presence of a polite colonel with a wooden leg, and a long straggling stringy red beard.

He called out of his window, which overlooked the principal court of the fortress, and there came up a smiling old

Perpignan

corporal, carrying a gigantic key or two. The *châtelain* led me up through a sort of cloister into another higher and smaller court, and thence up into the high tower.

There is a fine view from the top. Perpignan lies towards the southern angle of a fertile little province, inclosed between the sea and the mountains. The blue Mediterranean rounds the horizon beyond about three leagues of hamlet-chequered plain with white towers, olive-groves, and vineyards.

At about the same distance the Pyrenees come up from the sea ; and, growing taller and taller as they advance inland, curve round to the sea again about Narbonne.

CHAPTER V

LA JUNQUERA, *October 27.*

THE Pyrenees are very pretty mountains ; wild and picturesque, but not very grand hereabouts. The diligence started at three in the morning, and reached the entrance of the pass about daybreak, while the rosy hues of the yet unrisen sun were creeping from peak to peak among the distant hills.

We passed the embattled brow of lofty Bellegarde, which looms like a great pyramid with some steps cut in the top of it ; and I got out of France at El Boulou without having my passport examined on my passage through the country. But, alas ! at Junquera, the very first place in Spain, I was brought to a dead stand.

My passport—a Foreign-office one, I had got countersigned at the Spanish Legation, in Cavendish-square ; and as it ran, “ Visto en esta Legacion de su Majestad Catolica. Bueno para España,” I naturally supposed it was good for all Spain, or at least to enter the country anywhere I chose as a person warranted respectable.

But it now appeared that the signature of the Spanish secretary of legation, to whom I had taken the trouble to get a formal letter of introduction, was of no value without the indorsement of some trumpery Spanish consul at Perpignan, who could know nothing about my respectability, except that I was in possession of a genuine five-franc-piece.

A Spanish Impossibility

This little investigation, however, he appears to think it important to make on all travellers passing this way ; and, doubtless, gives the functionaries at the frontier something handsome for every passport they turn back to his office.

Among the rushes of Junquera, therefore, I am planted for twenty-four hours, till my passport can be sent back, to be rectified, and return. My entreaties and representations were all in vain ; and I now look back with affectionate regret upon my late elastic French impossibilities, where, after all, there is a substratum of reason and benevolence beneath the frothy surface of official formality.

I drank chocolate, smoked cigarillos, wrote an indignant letter, dined on garlicky victuals, slept well, and set off next morning about the same hour I had arrived the day before.

The diligence which brought back my passport and took me on to Figueras, brought me also a companion ;—a merry little pot-bellied, snub-nosed Andalusian shipowner, lately from the Brazils, who spoke French in a sort of pentameter cadence.

He was of some use to me as an interpreter (for though I have been studying a book of dialogues all through France, I have not yet acquired the Spanish idiom), and managed well enough when there was plain sailing ; but in any difficulty he fell soft and was easily done. But he had his merits, which consisted principally in eating and drinking, and laughing heartily.

At Figueras I ate more garlic, and nearly made myself sick by inhaling a *cigarito* of English tobacco. My companions at the *mesa redonda* (table d'hôte) said they had never seen an Englishman smoke the cigarette before. I told them that I did that and ate *ajo* (garlic), “ pour faire

Idiomatic Stimulants

sortir la langue Espagnole en m'accoutument la bouche aux usages du pays,"—to bring out the Spanish tongue by accustoming my mouth to the usages of the country.

The diligence stopped at Gerona to sup and sleep. It seems a stirring little city, all the inhabitants walking about in the lamplight. We set off again at two in the morning. Our road lay along the sea-coast, and was sometimes cut out of the face of the rocks overhanging the beach. We breakfasted at Mataro, and took the railway (which also skirts the sea) to Barcelona.

Here I washed myself, and my companion shaved and dressed himself very smart in new clothes which he had brought from Marseilles. I was admitted to his *levée*, and was consulted as to the several articles of apparel he selected from his trunk; for, like David with respect to Saul's regimentals, "he had not proved them."

It was rather comical to see this squat, swarthy little object trundling about in his dirty stockings and drawers, sorting and selecting his gaudy garments with as much care and hopeful anxiety about the effect he was about to produce on Barcelona, as if—but there is no difference between Hyperion and the Satyr when they look at themselves in the glass. It is a beautiful arrangement of Nature, that the snub-noses and pudding-faces, which so transparently mask the vanity behind them, are objects of such genuine interest to us.

More bother with my passport before I could take my place in the steamer for Valencia—more cheating of commissioners—more triple bars of inefficient *douanerie*, which pretends to examine, whether you come in or go out, and is bribed by ignoble sums to let it alone.

The steamer stops a day at Valencia. I went up from El Grao in a tartana, breakfasted, and ascended the cathe-

Valencia

dral tower. The view is fine. A large huddled city scattering itself and its innumerable steeples and towers through straggling suburbs and orange-groves into the fertile *huerta*, bounded by barren mountains and the sea.

CHAPTER VI

CARTHAGENA, *October 30.*

ALICANTE has a picturesque but somewhat tumble-down ortress.

There are some Americans aboard, one of whom characterised the above-mentioned citadel as "rather a high old hill."

We went ashore, ate figs and grapes in the market, climbed the high old hill, and saw a noble panorama of yellow, jagged, oriental-looking mountains.

There is another steamer lying off here; the engineers are, of course, Britons in both.

A voice over the blue waters—"Jim, my lad, can't you come *aboord* here?"

Answer—"Ain't got no time to day."

"Blow yer, you never ain't got no time; if you'll come aboard, I'll give yer a drop of blazing good gin." I made acquaintance with one of our engineers, giving him a pipe of British shag tobacco, which went to his heart, and awakened all the fragrant memories of his long-deserted home. He was a broad beefy man from Glasgow; had settled his family in Barcelona; the little boy was at school there, but his mother had taught him to read English. He was a sharp lad, and he wanted to send him back to school in England; the little girl could read Spanish, but English fairly puzzled her.

Carthagen

From Alicante to Carthagen we had cloudy and rough weather, wind ahead ; indeed, the Spaniards say we were in some danger. I slept while the tossing lasted ; but about two in the morning, when we got into the still water of Carthagen's harbour, I was waked up by the bustle of arriving, and could not get to sleep again for the bugs, which began biting furiously, as if they had been sea-sick, and just recovered their appetites.

At Valencia I had lost my greasy Andalusian, of whom I was about tired, and fallen in at the *Fonda del Cid* (where I breakfasted) with a Castilian—a dry, spare, high-featured, polite little man, in every respect, contrasted with my former companion. He talks more and better Spanish, and understands less French, from which I get thus gradually weaned, as I have to mix with it all the Spanish I can pick up, to make Don Alonzo understand. Sometimes I venture on a sentence of Spanish neat, and am beginning to understand a little of what is talked. To listen carefully and to talk rashly is the way to get a language.

Carthagen has a noble harbour, deeply sheltered beneath mountain-barriers of rock. There is also a vast and splendid arsenal. In the first are a few fishing-boats ; in the second, about enough material to set up a blacksmith, cord-maker, and gunsmith in British private life.

I next went up to the old ruined Moorish castle, and coming down rather heated, took a boat and bathed in the sea, at which the people on the pier were greatly surprised, for the day was cold, as we might wonder at a Greenlander bathing in a snow-storm. The water was warm enough. Afterwards we dined ; the party consisting of Don Alonzo, his friend Don Manuel (a grave man, something like pictures of the Emperor Napoleon, who is rather deranged in his stomach from our late rough work at sea), and myself.

Vermin Guerillas

We then adjourned to a café, where we met another friend of Don Alonzo's, an airified, black-bearded, young *empleado*; that is to say, Government official.

He had lately been married, and wished to show his house and wife to his friends, and a specimen of the *majo* costume to me: so we all went with him. His wife was young and pretty, and his holiday costume very gorgeous—rich green velvet all covered with silver spangles. I admired both, but expressed my admiration of the dress. He instantly said it was much at my disposal; and I replied, in a useful phrase out of the handbook, that it could not change its master without disadvantage. We took our leave, and retired to rest in our *casa de huéspedes*.¹ We had three beds in the same room. All three having undressed, lit a long cigar apiece, and went to bed. The lamp was put out, and the glowing cigar-ends were all we could see of one another. I observed, “*Quando se pone la luna, las estrellas se ven*” (when the moon sets, the stars appear), which was received as a brilliant sally by the company, who are very good-natured, and often much amused with my efforts at the language.

We talked and laughed till our cigars were done; and as we were getting drowsy, and dropping off, Don Alonzo cried out lustily for a light, saying, “*Los animalitos ya me pican muchisimo*” (the little animals have begun to sting me exceedingly). I had nearly choked myself smoking under the bedclothes, by way of dissuading the little animals from approaching me; but my torments shortly began, as by little and little the love of blood overcame the dislike to tobacco in the minds of my bedstead population. I waged a blind and ineffectual warfare all night, to the loss of my rest, and the maculation of my countenance.

¹ House of guests.

Canopus

ALGECIRAS, *November 1.*

Left Carthagena towards evening ; slept on deck for fear of the bugs, with which my berth abounds. In the morning we arrived at Almeria, where I lost my friend Don Alonzo. His wife and family came aboard the steamer to meet him, and seemed very glad to get him back. He had been to Marseilles with Don Manuel, to see after a ship they had chartered for that port.

I now fell in with an English wine-merchant on his way to Malaga, and a priggish little Portuguese. Together we marched up to the citadel, which we entered at the point of the cigar. It is an old ruined fortress of the Moors, full of "stones of emptiness," and prickly pears, garrisoned with a single sentry.

Leaving Almeria, we skirted along the rocky coast, above which, far inland, rose the gleaming ridges of the Sierra Nevada, mantled in their eternal winding-sheet of snow. I slept on deck again. The night was windy and cold. Towards morning, a large star rose in the south, in a line from the lower horn of the Bull, through the belt of Orion, produced to about thrice the distance between them. I have never seen so far into the southern heaven before, but I suspect the star is Canopus. The fore-horse of Charles's team nearly dips his nose into the sea as he wheels his wain round the sunken pole.

Malaga is a dull place, celebrated only for sweet wine and invalids. It has a clumsy cathedral, handsomer inside than out. In one part the stonework is gilt, and the churchwardens have probably only been prevented by their poverty from defacing it all in the same expensive way ; at least to us, gilding and paint detract from the idea of simple magnificence which belongs to highly-wrought

Gibraltar

stone-carving, because we never paint and gild it ourselves, and are accustomed to connect all such appearances with woodwork and stucco. Besides, gilding does not go well with the delicate fawn-colour of stone, and destroys all that intricate and minute shading which otherwise falls so softly over the tracery of a sculptured surface. It is like gilding the features of a statue.

After dining at the *Fonda de la Alameda*, I went on board and slept on deck. Awakened by cold in the middle of the night, I found we were approaching a small rocky island. As we passed, its form changed suddenly, showing a very sharp leaning peak. This was Gibraltar.

I re-arranged myself among some sails, one of which I half-unfurled and crept into. When I woke, we were lying off Algeciras. Seen from this point, across the bay, Gibraltar looks like an old man lying on his back upon a couch nearly level with the sea,—some huge giant of the prime who had gone to sleep there, and proved a Rip van Winkle on a large and permanent scale. The face, with a round bald head, resting on its pillow to the north, and the articulation of the knee, are very distinct. There is a ruckle in the bedclothes over his breast, as if his arms were crossed.

Gibraltar has no appearance of fortification in the distance—"no towers along the steep," and I should think it must disappoint some hundreds of highly-fortified expectations annually. It is, on the whole, certainly a striking rock; but I should say you might easily pick fifty such along the west coast of Scotland. But as you could not carry away these little pebbles in your pocket, and drop them at the mouths of important channels and seas, I suppose it does not much signify.

The straits, in passing outward beyond the ends of the

Gibraltar

world (of ancient navigation), look like the mouth of some gigantic river ; and I feel sure, that if the Mediterranean had been discovered from the outside, its finder would have been astonished as he proceeded to see so much water,—in fact to get into so large a bottle by so narrow a neck.

CHAPTER VII

CADIZ has been compared to a dish of silver. It is more like a service of white china on a blue tea-tray—cups and saucers, and teapots and coffee-pots, and butter-boats and sugar-basins, of all heights and shapes and sizes, but with an undue proportion of coffee-pots.

I steamed across the blue bay, and breakfasted with Don Francisco Morgan, a wine-merchant of Puerto de Santa Maria, to whom I had a letter. According to the custom of the country, there was wine on the table, and after breakfast I drank a glass of better sherry than I remember tasting before.

Happening to say so, he replied, "Do you like it? Very few Englishmen do at first. It is the pure wine."

"What!" said I, "do you adulterate your wines, and own it without contrition?"

"Without the slightest, for the mixture increases the cost of the wine. The natural dry wine which grows about Xeres is seldom sent to England unless specially ordered. It is flavoured, to suit the market, with a luscious sweet wine of the same neighbourhood, and tinted with what is called burnt wine, that is, wine boiled down till it is thick and dark-coloured. This creates a confusion of flavour, and destroys the fine clear twang of a natural vintage. We ourselves much prefer it unmixed, finding it much wholesomer, as well as more palatable; and if our

Wady'l Kubir (Arabice, Big River)

English customers would learn to like sherry in its simple state, it would save us a good deal of trouble, and them some expense."

He took me over a large *bodega* (cellar), and made me taste a few dozen pipes, of different ages ; also the sweet sherry and burnt wine, neither of which were bad by themselves, though I don't think they improve the original sherry.

The Señora Morgan had a sister married to a *marques* in Seville, and to him Don Francisco gave me a letter of introduction. He also gave me a letter of credit on a banker in Cadiz, which, with singular providence, I had entirely omitted to take into consideration before leaving England, as I then had my pockets full of money. It was quite an accident my having any letters of introduction even, of which some kind friend, whom I never asked nor thanked, threw a few into my portmanto.

Guadalquivir is a flat-banked, muddy river, adorned only by some distant mountains of the Sierra de Ronda to the right. Seven hours brought us in sight of the *Giralda* and the Golden Tower.

A cosmopolitan vagabond from Gibraltar conducted me to the Fonda de Madrid, a clean and respectable hotel. He took me in by the gate of Triana. Let everybody coming to Seville by the steamer insist on entering by the gate of San Fernando, which is not a hundred yards out of his way whatever hotel he is going to ; as by doing so he will pass the Cathedral and *Plaza*, and get a favourable first impression of the city.

I resisted the overtures of the Gibraltese *laquais de place*, conceiving I should have leisure to grope about, and find out what was worth seeing in the course of the winter without being led or driven.

The second day after my arrival in Seville some pas-

A Re-encounter

sengers came in from the steamer during the *table d'hôte* dinner, and among them was the young German I had met at the Waterloo station, and travelled to Southampton with. We agreed that the world cannot be half so big as is supposed, since if you meet a man once, it is always even betting that you will meet him again.¹ Together, we explored the city, discovered the cathedral, and wandered through its dim, vast, echoing aisles, where innumerable quaintly-carved and painted virgins stand amid their several constellations of candles; and here and there some divine picture by Murillo or Alonso Cano, looks graciously down from its dark recess, through massive gates of gilded iron. We stood before the famous Guardian Angel. New-lighted from the clouds, and looking down with serious eyes of love upon his charge, he leads the baby soul with one hand, and with the other points to a brightening Heaven. We stood and gazed, while, murmuring far away in mellow cadence, rose and fell the many-voiced chant; and, faintly wafted from the swinging censers, came fragrant incense in transparent wreaths.

I called on the Marques de Castilleja and delivered my letter. He was an amiable, intelligent man, with very quiet manners, light complexion, and talked excellent French. He bade me be seated in a comfortable arm-chair, and made no sort of fuss about my hat, which rather took me aback; as I had carefully got up all the ancient ceremonial described in Ford, and was prepared to struggle at least a quarter of an hour which of us should set it down. Instead

¹ I met him again at Malaga, and three years afterward in Naples. He told me he was engaged to a Malagan lady, and was about to settle there in the wine-trade. Any reader about to order sweet or dry Malaga is recommended to Herr Rudolph Dill.

Introductions

of this, he sat down again on the sofa from which he had risen to make me welcome, and opened the conference by offering me a cigar.

As we sat smoking, another gentleman came in, and was introduced to me as the Marques de Esquibel, the vice-president of the Casino or club, who promised to send me a card of *presentacion*, whereby the person presented becomes a member by invitation for twenty days, after which time, if he continues in Seville, he is balloted for, and becomes a subscribing member at about six shillings a month.

When our cigars were ended, I took my leave ; on which the marques placed his house at my disposal, and I replied that he also possessed a house at the Fonda de Madrid.

In a day or two he called, and told me that he was now in mourning for his father (who had died a few months ago), and therefore went about but little ; also having a great deal of business, settling his *mayorazgo* (entail), and paying off his brother's and sister's fortunes. He would therefore present me to a great friend of his, who was "moving in circles," and could introduce me to his friends at the club and opera.

We went out together, and arrived at a stately marble gateway of a large house, just opposite the Museum, in the Calle de las Armas. Here, through the slender and graceful tracery of the *reja* or filigree gate, could be seen a marble-floored and pillared and fountained patio. We rang. "Quien es?" was exclaimed, in the shrill voice of the portress. (Who is it?) "Gente de paz" (People of peace), I replied, to show I knew what to say ; on which the door opened by a hidden spring, and the marques laughed, and wondered where I got that old-fashioned answer. I said I had a red book full of *cosas d'España*.

Don José Laso de la Vega was finishing a small concert,

Murillo

in which he played the flute. We begged him to proceed while we smoked our cigars. The marques left me here, and went back to his papers and lawyers. After a while the musicians departed, and I went out with Don José and visited the *Museo*.

After getting weary in long galleries of indifferent pictures, we came into the Sala de Murillo, a large room hung round with Murillo's best pictures. I never saw such pictures before—such soft, transparent, airy, and yet real imaging of things divine. His cherubs look as if a slight draught would float them out of their frames. It is worth while to go to Seville if it were only to see this room.

We took a walk afterwards in the town ; and a shower coming on, sought shelter in an *estanco de tabacos*, where the Calle de las Sierpes debouches on the Plaza de la Constitucion. Here behind the counter sat a lady of great beauty and wit, entertaining a handful of loitering admirers with brilliant things, which made them laugh very much, and which I was grieved not to understand. This was the celebrated Asuncion Gonzalez. Don José formally introduced me, and she received me with gracious condescension. I was surprised at the respectful deference with which the young men treated her ; but I shortly learned that she was a formidable sort of Aspasia, and a match for any Pericles that Seville could produce. As the Calle de las Sierpes is the principal thoroughfare of Seville, which one passes every day wherever one is bound, I made a practice of buying my *cigarillos* in her *estanco*, and carried on during my stay in Seville a serio-comic, but strictly Platonic courtship, which greatly improved my Spanish. The only exception to the Platonic character of our friendship was one kiss fairly bargained for and received, in the way of business, for a portrait of herself, executed in my best style in

How to Learn Spanish

water-colours. I made sonnets to her eyebrows in the most Castalian Castillian I was master of, and sat on the counter reading them in my most impressive manner. I made her a silver heart, engraved with a bolted and pad-locked folding-door, and a weeping Cupid waiting on the door-step; which, being worn round her neck, was to cause her heart to open to me in the course of nine days; but I never got any forwarder, except in the language. Here is one of the lays:—

A ti dichosa amar parece broma,
 Apiñado tu corazon de amores.
 El que se aguarda un rato entre las flores
Luego por harto perderá el aroma.
 Amada de tantos tu dulce flor,
 Por tan amada pierdes el amor.

Medroso, como con alas cansadas
 Por media mar un ave a barco viene,
 Mi desterrado corazon que tiene
Ninguna percha de sus aletadas,
 Llegaba descansar sobre tu pecho—
 Ay, de que frio encuentra el rico lecho!

Translated thus (after the manner of the Ancients):—

To thee, the portals of whose heart serene
 A hundred lovers throng, love seems a jest.
One that in sweetest flowers long couch'd hath been
 Shall find their fragrant perfume lose its zest.
Thou by so many prized, most rarest flower,
From being so much loved, know'st not love's power.

As in mid-ocean comes with weary wings
 Some timid bird upon a sail to light,
Mine exiled heart with weary flutterings,
 Without a resting-place to ease its flight,
Hath come at last to perch upon thy breast—
Alas, how cold a spot to seek for rest!

Sevillised Life

I suppose I contrived to amuse her, for she tolerated me as one of her most troublesome adorers: she certainly amused me, and I hope the reader will not be scandalised.

I lived in the house of one Juliana, once a celebrated beauty; here also lived my Spanish master, Señor Vasquez—the only master of languages in all Seville. He speaks and teaches English, French, and his native language. The course of my life used to be something like this:—

In the morning I read Don Quixote with Señor Vasquez. Breakfast on chocolate and toast. Feeling rather cold, I open my window and go out to smoke a cigarillo on the sunny balcony, during which I divide my attention between the stream of cloaked and mantilla'd figures passing through the Calle de Velasquez, and a beautiful señora over the way. She is separated from her husband, and sits stitching, or reading her missal at the window all day.

Then I sit reading, writing, or engraving; and perhaps Miguel Laso de la Vega, or Ramon Ponce de Leon, or Antonio Rueda, come in and smoke a cigar. Then we go out for a walk, and coming about three o'clock down to the *Orilla* quay (which is both the Serpentine's shore and the Rotten-row of Seville), there pace about among the beauty and fashion of the place on the pleasant shore of Guadalquivir.

This is really the drawing-room of Sevillian society, for there is no general society anywhere else. A few houses make a feeble effort at evening parties, but it is contrary to the habits of the city, and does not succeed. Houses are looked upon as home; merely places to live, and eat, and sleep, as privately as possible. In the opera or theatre and the *paseo* (public walks) they manage to see enough of their acquaintances. Intimate friends are of course a part of home, and may sit in a corner of the sala, lighted only by

The Casino

the dim smouldering embers of the *brasero*, while the *señora madre* mends her stockings by the solitary lamp.

I dine at home and go to the Casino for coffee. Here, in a long narrow room, a group are standing in animated conversation before the blazing wood-fire at the end; and all along the sofa-range on either side, are rows of gentlemen with little tables standing before them, and cups of very black coffee or very pale tea, according as the table's occupant may emulate English or French manners.

"Buenos tardes, Don Jorge; Good evening, Don Jorge;
como va? how goes it?"

"Sin novedad; y Vmd. Señor Without novelty; and your
Conde? worship, Sir Count?"

"Perfectamente. To perfection.

"M'alegro. I rejoice.

"Va Vmd. al teatro? Do you go to the Opera?"

"No tengo inconveniente. I don't mind.

"Luego iremos juntos. Presently we will go together.

"Hasta luego. Till then—"

I sit down and cry "Juan!" The waiter comes.

"Me traiga Vmd. café. May your worship bring me
coffee.

"Ya voy. Already I go."

As he brings the coffee, Don Lorenzo, who is a captain of artillery, comes and sits down by me. He is "muy formal y politico" (very punctilious and polite), and justly proud of his French.

"Bon soir, mon ami."

"Bon soir, M. le Capitaine. *Quiere Vmd. café?*"—(Do you desire coffee?) (If you are eating or drinking, and a person comes and speaks to you, it is indispensable to offer him some.) He says "*Muchas gracias*" (many thanks), which means No.

and its Habitué's

“Allons ! un cigare ?”

“Avec plaisir. Savez-vous les dernières nouvelles de la Reine ?”

“J'espère qu'elle se porte mieux.”

“On dit que la blessure tient neuf pouces de profondeur.”

“Quelle merveille qu'elle n'est pas morte ! Comment trouvez-vous le cigare ?”

“C'est de très bon tabac.”

As I increased in my Spanish, my friends, who had formerly talked French to me, began to give it up ; for, whatever persons may intend to do, they *do* always practically converse in that tongue which is, on the whole, the easiest means of communication ; and I could mark my progress in the language as it rose and flooded, one by one, nearly all the French of my acquaintance.

A large party generally adjourned to the opera soon after seven. Don José Laso assured me that his box (*palco*) was my house, and I used often to go there, not for the music, which was third-rate, but being a large sheltered box over the stage, it was a convenient place to talk and smoke, and there were usually assembled in it half a dozen or so of my most intimate friends. After the theatre I either went to bed, an evening party, or back to sup on chocolate and *pan frito*¹ at the Casino.

Sometimes, of mornings, I used to go and sit in the studio of Egron Lundgren, a very clever artist and agreeable young man. He is a Swede, and speaks English, French, Spanish, Italian, German, and I do not know how many other languages, all very well. His paintings were usually the costumes of the country, which he did with great truth, spirit, and taste ; and great force and tone of colouring. He also does admirable rapid sketches in water-

¹ Bread fried in oil.

Lundgren's Studio

colours, and he used to give me a hint or two now and then, and let me copy what I liked out of his portfolio, which was full of gems.

Sometimes I used to take a long walk by myself, and once got as far as Santi Ponce, when I slept in the *pajar* (straw-loft) of the venta there ; and next day went on to the ruins of the ancient city of Italica, where there are the remains of a Roman theatre. But this is described elsewhere.

Once the Marques de Castilleja took me out for a day or two to a country-house of his in the Campo de Carmona, where he has olive-farms. I wrote at the time some little account of the expedition, and here it is.

CHAPTER VIII

VISIT TO AN OLIVE-FARM

SEVILLA, *Pasqua de los Reyes*, 1852.

ON Saturday, January 4, 1852, I dressed myself in my Andalusian costume, breakfasted, put up a couple of shirts and other things, "tan claras y tan necessarias que no es menester de describirlas" ;¹ besides which, I stuck the six-barrelled revolver in my *faja* (sash).

I sat smoking my cigarillo over a chapter of Thomas à Kempis. There came a knock at the door, and I cried, "*Adelantes*" (forward), and he entered,—not the person I was waiting for, but my preceptor in the Spanish. It was not his day, but he had missed the preceding, his hours having been, as they often are, deranged by saints' days, and he came now instead. Though I had no idea we should have time to finish it, I began my lesson, to fill up the moral vacuum which is always caused by expecting anybody, and was busy translating "The Bible in Spain" into my best extempore Spanish, when an ancient serving-man of the Marques de Castilleja arrived, and informed me that the marques was waiting in the Calle de la Muela, my own street (the Calle de Velasquez) being too narrow for carriages.

¹ "So evident and so necessary that it is not needful to describe them."—*Don Quixote*.

Commencement of Journey

I put on my *Calaniès* hat, which is about the shape and size of a small cheese or a large skittle-ball, and my coarse *capa* (cloak) of *panno pardo* (brown cloth) turned up with scarlet, under the ample folds of which I carried my little linen bag of movables, and sallied forth. I found the marques (also got up for the country in the national costume) seated in a very red and yellow *calesa*, and we jogged slowly out of the town by the gate of Triana.

This gate is exactly on the opposite side of the town from our direction ; but we took it because the streets are in that direction passable, which those towards the Caños de Carmona scarcely are.

Having made half the circuit of the city outside the walls, we turned towards the open country by the road which skirts the ancient Moorish aqueduct (*caños*) which supplies the city with water. The famous Guadalquivir supplies it only with a limited navigation and unlimited mud.

The roads were very bad, and we went along at a foot-pace, till, passing the Cruz del Campo, we came to Torre Blanca, where there is a white tower (from which the place takes its name), a toll-bar, and a venta. Here we descended to drink a glass of manzanilla and eat a little round sponge-cake whitened with sugar outside, which the ventero informed us were "muy buenos, de Alcalá." At Torre Blanca we left the *camino real*, and struck off on the old *arrecife* (by-road) de Carmona ; and the dark green orange-groves, interspersed with still darker cypress spires, which had lined the approach to Seville, changed into the bushy *dehesa*, or wilderness.

The narrow track was lined with wild olives and *palmitas*, and here and there the aloe lifted its gigantic spikes.

The road did not improve, being in places hidden by long pools of water. The day was beautiful, and we went along

Description of the Road

talking and laughing, without troubling ourselves about the pace we went, more than an occasional word of banter with the steady old *calesero*, who sat at the marques's feet, with his legs dangling over the shafts.

To the left appeared, through the misty mid-day sunshine of the plain, the brown range of the Sierra Morena ; and to the right, in the far distance, arose the blue mountains of Ronda.

After a while the *dehesa* changed to olive-groves, and we got into mazy private roads which wound among the trees. At last, after about three hours and a half, we came in sight of a long low mass of white building, with a pinnacle-mounted gateway, through which we passed, amid the greetings of a motley crowd of retainers, into a vast courtyard, around which were the establishments for grinding the olives and storing the oil, besides stables and dwellings for the retainers.

Here, leaving the *calesa*, we went through an iron gate into a *patio* (court) with a fountain and marble arches and columns. The house was a curious, rambling arrangement of corridors and passages, and galleries hung with quaint old family portraits in wigs and brocade, and likenesses of the kings of Judah, signalised with their respective names in yellow paint.

Having inspected the house, and lastly reached the dining-room, the basket which had come with us from Seville was unpacked, and out of it came cold fowls, and ham and beef, butter, chocolate, and a paper of tea. As it was three o'clock, we lunched, and ordered dinner at nine, being waited upon by a stout old lady, the wife of the steward.

Each of us now armed himself with a polished yew club, which appears to be the legitimate companion of predial inspection, and sallied forth. This stick (called *porro*) is

The Olive-Mill

five or six feet long, usually forked at the smaller end, and is held a little above the middle, with the heavy knob on the ground ; so that when you walk, it swings between its planting-places like a pendulum. The one the marques used was a sort of hereditary rural sceptre, which had descended to him from the hands of his father and grandfather, and very likely from their fathers and grandfathers to them.

We first went to see the olive-mill. In form it very much resembles a chocolate-mill :—a huge wheel of granite, shaped like the thick end of a cone, rolls round a piece of timber on which it is pivoted, being drawn by a mule yoked to a crooked beam. This beam, jutting from the central timber, bends over the wheel, receiving half-way the other end of its axle.

On the opposite side of the central timber (which is also pivoted in the stone crushing-floor and a beam of the roof) there is a wooden funnel full of olives. This keeps slowly laying down the plump purple berries, which the roller, as it comes round, crushes with a fat crackling sound, not unlike that which proceeds from the basting of meat, only on a larger scale.

The pulp, as it accumulates, is shovelled off and placed in layers between round mats under the press. These mats are about six feet in diameter, and have a hole in the middle. When there is a sufficient pile of pulp and mat sandwiches, the whole is wetted with hot water, and the press (an immense lever, about forty feet long) comes down upon it, being lifted at the other end by a screw with spokes like a capstan. The oil, of course, floats on the surface of the water and is run off into tanks.

Having seen how the oil was made, we went out to see how the olives were gathered, accompanied by Ramoncillo,

The Gathering

the gamekeeper,—a strange, lurching vagabond, who squinted at right angles, and had all his arms and legs of different lengths. He wore the dress of the country, much the worse for wear ; over his broad, red, slovenly-arranged *faja* were strapped a profusion of outlandish belts and baldricks, and in his hand he bore a musket ornamented with silver.

After wandering some time among the devious paths of the olive-grove, we found the little colony of gatherers ; for colony it seemed, being composed of men, women, and children down to the smallest possible dimensions. The babies, who had usually a very little girl to take care of them (unless they were slung up in a *manta* out of the way, among their metaphorical brotherhood of olive-branches), sprawled and babbled around headquarters.

Here, by a purple mountain of spoil, stood the general of the army, who in all directions were waging war with the trees of peace, besieging them with scaling-ladders, and belabouring them with long staves. The women (whose petticoats were tucked up above their waists, but who, to make up for this little deficit of decency, wore breeches) were on their knees underneath, picking up the bright little berries as they rained from the beaten boughs. I tasted an olive, though I was aware it was not likely to be good. Let the reader imagine a rotten morel cherry soaked in oil, and he will not be far from having an idea of a ripe olive, except that there is a bitter, astringent after-taste, which sticks in the throat, and prickles on the tongue for some time.

The green olives, which we eat in their pickled state, are no more like the ripe, than pickled walnuts are like the walnuts of dessert.

When any of the women had filled their baskets, they came with them on their heads to the purple mountain aforesaid, and discharged their gatherings upon the heap.

The Tallies

If there was much leaf and rubbish mixed with the fruit, the woman tilted up her basket behind, and let a slender stream of olives fall from above her forehead, while a man with a flapping sack winnowed away the lighter matters.

Over the heap stood guard the steward or *capataz*, an ancient man, with a grizzly stubble on his chin (for it was Saturday), standing with his legs apart, broadly planted in the dignity of his office. The straddling supporters of this weight of importance were incased in what seemed in front to be a pair of brown sheepskin breeches, but from behind revealed themselves to be but a slit apron, fastened with thongs round each leg. Both his hands were on his hips, with each thumb hooked in the folds of his *faja*, and in the fingers of his right was a crooked whittle, with which ever and anon, as the basketfuls arrived, he would nick the score upon notch-sticks which hung in a curve of string between two branches of an olive hard by.

These sticks were regular tallies. Each basket had a couple of loops, in which the gatherer's stick rested, and when the basket was discharged, the bearer presented it to the *capataz*. He, fitting it on to its brother on the line, nicked them both with his eagle-beaked blade.

The sun went down, and we returned to the *hacienda* (farm). The marques said that the *cura* would probably have arrived by the time we got home. He came from Carmona every Saturday to say mass on the Sunday morning, being chaplain of the establishment. We found the olive-mill still working, lighted by flaring wicks in iron saucers of its own oil. At one of these we lighted our cigars, and were talking to the millers, when there entered a corpulent old figure, dressed in a rusty-brown jacket and breeches, a *Calaniés* hat, black leathern *botines* (the embroidered greave of the country), and a broad black *faja*:

The Curate

he embraced the marques with great affection and a profuse ejaculation of "vayas."¹ The marques presented me as "un Inglés amigo mio."—"Y muy amigo mio—Vaya, vaya, vaya!" answered the courteous *cura*, for so he effectively turned out, though at first I took him to be some superintendent over the head of the stout Madruga.

We now entered the house, where, at the end of one of the galleries, a great wood fire was burning on the hearth. Here we whiled away the time till supper, which, though bespoken at nine, made its appearance at eight; for in Spain meals, as well as all other arrangements, are ruled more by a sort of general approximation to the fitness of things than by any precise hours. The supper comprised *gazpacho*, and salad, and eggs fried in oil, with a little cold chicken and ham to eke out. We then returned to our blazing fire-side, which flared with a brilliant white flame, some *borruja* (the oily offal of the olive-press) having been thrown on the embers.

Here we smoked and talked, and were shortly joined by Madruga, who seated himself also by the fire, and discoursed in a somewhat sententious and confidential manner concerning the interests of the *hacienda*, the price of oil, &c. The marques from time to time supplied him with cigarillos from a special parcel which he brought on purpose for his people. It was an edifying sight to see the solemn and deliberate manner in which he lighted them. In a pause of his talk, he would take a wooden ember in the tongs, and, holding it several minutes in suspense, he would proceed to dilate on matters of state; then, in another pause, he would blow the cinder to keep it alight, and after a while

¹ Literally "Go!" an interjection which, according to the tone, expresses encouragement or reprobation. "Get along" is perhaps nearest to it in our idiom.

The Mass

apply the end of his cigar, drawing a succession of whiffs between his words, which (the whiffs) came out again in long streams from his nostrils ; for in this country the fumes of the *cigarillo* are breathed down into the bottom of the lungs, and come out in volumes unknown to the short mouthful-puff of cigar and pipe-smoking nations.

At about half-past nine we went to bed. The *cura* and Madruga attended our *couchée*, smoking and talking, and assisting us in undressing ; after which they took away the lamp, and departed with a good night from the *capataz* and the *cura's* blessing.

On Sunday morning, at a quarter to seven, the *cura* and *capataz* made their appearance, and woke us up to hear mass. I jumped out of bed, and, to the great astonishment of the company, washed myself in cold water. The old *cura*, I believe, at first thought I had been seized with a sudden madness, and declared that such a process, he was certain, would kill him on the spot ; by which statement it plainly appeared that he had never tried it.

We dressed, and wrapping ourselves in our *capas*, entered a gallery of the chapel opposite the altar, where the *cura*, attired in his robes, was already officiating, the people being gathered under the gallery. The gamekeeper officiated as *sacristano*. The altar was profusely decorated with paint and gilding, and possessed two very handsome wooden statues of the Virgin—the one above, about two feet high ; the other below, the size of life. These decorations had belonged to a private chapel of the marques's family in one of the convents at Seville, at whose dismantling they had been removed to this place. The chapel itself was a small high room at the end of a cloister, under the columns of the *patio*, upon which it opened with wide folding doors ; so that when these were flung open, the cloister became the

The Wolf-Dogs

body of the chapel, where all the labourers collected. The gallery above the doors we entered from the house. After mass, the marques and *cura* sat by the fire while I danced a mixture of a Highland fling and hornpipe up and down the long gallery, to warm myself, after my ablutions and devotions.

After a little while the marques retired with a pan of hot water to make his toilette, and I went out to take a walk. The men were all loitering about the court smoking and talking, and saluted me with a "*Vaya Vmd. con Dios*" (may your worship go with God), as I passed the portal arch. I turned to the right, and set off to make the circuit of the fortifications. A wall about fifteen feet high and about half a mile in length inclosed the whole house, with its courts and gardens, in an irregular figure, something like a pentagon. I had not got above halfway round, when I was assailed by a great dog, about two feet and a half high, long and broad in proportion, and a very formidable and fierce opponent to my further passage in that direction.

I was ashamed to turn back, though there was nobody looking on, the great stimulus of faltering fortitude, without which, as Sancho well says, "Pues no haya quien nos vea, menos habrá quien nos note de cobardes."¹ I therefore wrapped my left arm in my cloak, and picked up a large round stone, with which to fortify my knuckles in case of an actual encounter, and proceeded slowly, facing my antagonist, who kept growling lustily, and snarling at me with ravenous teeth.

Having gone some way in the company of the enemy, who kept making unpleasant little rushes at me,—coming within a few feet, and then springing on one side, as if not

¹ "Since none see us, fewer will remark our cowardice."—*Don Quixote*.

Miga Fare

liking to lay hold of me while I showed fight,—I heard another burst of barking a little way off, and perceived a second dog of the same dimensions, and apparently of the same political opinions. I now thought I was in for it, and began to wonder how it would feel to be worried by these two wolf-dogs; and remembered the death of a badger under similar circumstances, at which, I am sorry to say, I was once present. But when things are at their worst, the remedy often arises in the midst; and I perceived that the other dog was chained in the immediate neighbourhood of some clothes, and implements, and victuals belonging to the labourers, who had left them to attend mass. It immediately occurred to me that this was the object which the loose dog wished to deter me from approaching. I therefore jumped over a little stream and made a slight *détour* to the left, conceiving that a compromise under the circumstances was not dishonourable; for, as Sancho says again, “Retirarse no es huir, ni el esperar cordura, quando el peligro sobrepuja á la esperanza.”¹

On my return we breakfasted. Eggs fried in oil—*Miga* (bread-crumbs steeped in water and sprinkled with salt, with hot oil poured over it, in which a little bit of garlic has been boiled). This is eaten with chocolate, and is not bad.

The English have a strange unfounded prejudice against oil, and in favour of butter, which is as near as possible the same thing, only that oil is a clean, pure, vegetable fat, which keeps better, and is infinitely easier to have good than butter; while butter is the result of a greasy animal secretion, milked out of unpleasant udders by a dirty-fisted wench. Butter is not good after three days' keeping; and accordingly, is much oftener eaten bad than good. Never-

¹ “To retreat is not to fly, nor to wait wisdom, when the peril is greater than the prize.”—*Don Quixote*.

Oil v. Butter

theless good butter is a good thing ; and we eat it, because we know it to be so, in spite of all the disagreeable ideas which are connected with its origin. But of oil, from unfamiliarity, we have an abhorrence. Our first acquaintance with it in childhood is through that unencouraging sample called after the elder of the constellated twins ; our next is in the smell of the lamp. When subsequently we see oil in a salad, it shocks our prejudices. On tasting it with a candid determination, we find it good ; but still there are few Englishmen who, in tasting a sample of oil, would swallow a spoonful, which a Spaniard would do as unconcernedly as we should a spoonful of cream. I have the national horror of oil, but I cannot say that, on honest experiment, I find that in good cookery it is a bit worse than the best butter ; and in some cases it is better.

After breakfast, I drew a likeness of the *cura*. We then went out to see the labourers at work, for it was past twelve. I took my pistol, and discharged its six barrels in succession at the trunk of an old olive-tree. The *cura*, as well as the olive-tree, was much struck, and the people astonished. The labourers were finishing their dinners, and I took a sketch of the group, which was very picturesque, being composed of men, women, and children, in very heterogeneous attire and attitudes. After this I took another sketch of the donkeys, with their great *estera* (matting) panniers on their backs, resting under the trees, waiting to carry away the fruit. The sun was very pleasant, and having finished my sketches, I spread my cloak, and lying upon it, with my head on a pannier, and a cigarillo in my mouth, I went to sleep, and did not wake till three o'clock. The marques, who woke up about the same time, proposed that we should return to the *hacienda* mounted on the donkeys, which we accordingly did.

Gazpacho and Portrait

We sat a little while in the olive-mill, on which the sun was shining, while the thin melancholy mule, with matting blinders, walked his dreary round. I here made another sketch of the premises and machinery ; and Ramoncillo, the gamekeeper, who had seen me draw his father, the *capataz*, requested me to draw one of the millers, a very grim personage in a scarlet cap, something like those of Catalonia. I told Ramoncillo himself to come upstairs to be drawn after dinner, for he was too picturesque a vagabond to be left out of my sketch-book.

After dinner, he accordingly presented himself ; and as his mother had just summoned me to witness the confection of *gazpacho*, I compromised the matter by painting in the kitchen. As to the *gazpacho*, it is made by breaking up a tomato, a pimento, and a little bit of garlic, about as big as half of a split kidney-bean. This is done in a strong pot with a wooden pestle. About three table-spoonfuls of oil, four or five of vinegar, and a dozen of water, mixed with the vegetable pulp, form the sauce, in which a mass of bread-crumbs are steeped, which being accomplished, the compound is *gazpacho*.

While this operation was going on, I set up Ramoncillo in a corner of the kitchen, leaning on his musket, and drew and painted him. The old lady would now call my attention to some fresh ingredient in the mortar, and then come and exclaim over the growing likeness.

“They were his very eyes !” (The portrait squinted it possible more horribly than the original.) “And only see how the breeches are exactly of the same colour.” They were of a sky-blue. But what most delighted her, and the other relatives of the victim who gathered round his execution, was, that I did not omit even the little jet brooch which he wore in his shirt-front. The representation of

A Cup of Tea

this remarkable object by an oblong spot of black paint was considered a master-stroke of art.

When I had done, there were murmurs of applause, mingled with eager whisperings, which I guessed were to the point of whether I could be persuaded to leave this portrait with his family ; and sure enough in the evening, after supper, the *cura* opened this delicate question with much diplomatic skill, and I finally had to cut him out of my book. After a short visit to the olive harvest, we returned and sat by our blazing chimney, to which resorted the patriarch Madruga, several of his sons, and a few of the labourers. These last were not accommodated with chairs, but squatted round the hearth on their hams, and were supplied with cigars occasionally from the marques's special paper. *Madruga*, which, in Spanish, means the dawn, is not the patronymic of the *capataz*, though he is invariably called by it. It is an honourable sobriquet which he had acquired in his youth by habits of early rising. The marques made some strong aniseed-brandy (*aguardiente*) punch, and regaled the company.

After the tag-rag of the party had retired, the marques made some very strong tea, which, with slices of bread and butter, was our supper. Old Madruga and his wife looked on at this un-Spanish meal as the simple inhabitants of some farm-house in Yorkshire might do, if a travelled son of the landlord were to make a bowl of *gazpacho* for his shooting-luncheon. When we had done, the remains of the pot were administered to them, and they drank it, for the honour of the thing, with some wry faces. The *cura* entertained us after tea with passages from his life : he had been a soldier up to the fall of Napoleon, and had broken some of his limbs in amateur bull-fighting. Next day we returned to Seville.

CHAPTER IX ¹

SEVILLE, *Jan. 9, 1852.*

THE enchanted city still encircles me with her Moorish girdle of battlements and towers. The winter continues to be as sultry as usual, and the roses by the banks of Guadalquivir bloom unwashed save by the dews and the Infanta's gardeners. Often in my early morning walk, I see young men, in the gay costume of the Andalusians, scale the little palisade defences, and with the hasty hand of stealth pluck a flower or two, eluding the truly Spanish vigilance of the horticultural staff, to say nothing of the military point of honour (bayonet, of course) which guards the palace portal just over the way. I see these depredations and sigh, not for the national disregard of royal property, but because I know the happy pilferer will soon see his fragrant spoil twined in the raven tresses of his dark-eyed Andaluza.

Talking about dark eyes, there are some very dangerous lightnings shot from the dusk of the cloudy mantilla (if the semi-transparent black blonde which deeply borders it may poetically license that shiny silk piece of attire to be called cloudy, but you see my clouds were necessary for my lightning), and I have been much struck many times.

¹ The remainder of the volume is chiefly extracted from letters. The indulgent reader, bearing this in mind, will perhaps be more ready to pardon what might seem an undue familiarity of style, if addressed directly to the public.

Spirit of Adventure

Harry has written that he is coming out by the steamer of the 27th to console me in my exile. In any case, it would be a very kind deed to go such a distance to console a cheerful invalid (who has next to nothing the matter with him), even if he were not otherwise than in the mind to travel, for a start of fifteen hundred miles alone is not a light undertaking; but in his case, wearied as he is with that dreadful expedition over the western deserts, whose hardships have made him cling the more to happy England, it is an act of self-sacrificing friendship to exchange the peace and quiet, and comfortable living of home, for the stringy *ollas* and ravenous fleas of Spanish travel.

It is my custom to take a walk during the hour or two before sunset; and one afternoon, having crossed Guadalquivir by the bridge of boats connecting Seville with Triana, I passed through that suburb of gipsies, and the orange-groves which line the road beyond, and coming out upon the open country, continued my walk about half across the plain lying between the river and the western range of hills.

It is true that this plain is not more than a league in width; but I knew that if I crossed it I should want to ascend the hill, in order to look down upon the beautiful city, lit with the slanting rays of sunset. Now, if I got to the top of the hill within the sunset hour, I should have to come back about five miles to Seville, in the dark. I thought of going on, and taking my chance where I slept and what became of me, and the spirit of adventure seized me there and then.

But I reflected, that in making an expedition of that sort it would be better to set out prepared with a little money for support, my six-barrelled revolver for defence, and a more Iberian cast of get-up; for as I then stood, or rather sat, on the parapet of a little bridge, my costume was such

My Disguise

as London might have looked upon without either admiration or astonishment.

Next morning after breakfast I loaded my revolver, and went out to purchase my outfit. This consisted of half a dozen filigree buttons and a *faja*. The *faja* is a scarf, usually of a scarlet woollen stuff, something like close thick-wove bunting, about a foot wide, and varying from three and a half to seven yards in length. This is wrapped round and round the waist, and at last tucked in beneath the folds over one of the hips, with the fringed end hanging out a little. It is a comfortable thing, giving both warmth and support to the body. An Andalusian can no more do without his *faja* than a lady could cast her stays.

I returned to my lodging and dressed. A pair of black trousers and a black waistcoat (with the filigree buttons) were divided by my scarlet *faja* gaily striped with yellow and blue, and purple and green. I wore, besides, a seedy old black shooting-jacket, and a brown Scotch plaid, with a red stripe in it, slung over my shoulder, to look as much like a *manta* as possible; and on my head a gigantic wide-awake, such as the peasants wear in lower Brittany, where I got it last summer. It is a good hat for a hot climate, being very thick, and having a rim about nine inches wide.

Thus attired in the costume of a nondescript vagabond, I stuck my revolver well out of sight in the folds of my *faja*, and sallied forth. I was in great fear lest I should meet some of my fashionable Sevillian acquaintance in this guise, but I was lucky enough to clear the gate of Triana without any such mischance. It reassured me, to observe that the tag-rag-and-bobtail who lounge about, and sell and buy fish and vegetables on the bank of Guadalquivir, and who are very picturesque and irregular in their own attire, stared at

Pride in Rags

me less now than they were accustomed to do in my ordinary dress.

I felt a sort of independent pride in being thus tacitly admitted into the fraternity of vagabonds, whose privilege it is to avoid being stared at and begged of.

I crossed the bridge of boats, lifting my hat devoutly as I passed by the painted wooden shrine of San José, in the middle of it. On reaching the main street of Triana, which runs parallel with the river, I turned to the right, intending to skirt the banks, and go up to Alcala del Rio by Santi Ponce; but getting into some brick-fields and tileries, I changed my mind, and cut across to the road I had followed the day before, resolving to ascend the hill.

As I cleared the suburb, advancing across the plain, and often turning, the Giralda, and then the huge body of the cathedral, appeared to rise higher and higher, as smaller surrounding objects were dwarfed by distance. Hereupon I made these reflections:—

“In a city, the great cathedral attracts our attention, and lifts our eyes a moment, and is lost as we turn the corner of some insignificant little street; but as we depart from the city, the great cathedral becomes more and more its crowning point—its sole feature.

“So, in the throng and bustle of life, is religion. The greatness of God and the beauty of holiness may strike our imagination, or even lift our heart in momentary adoration, shut out of view too soon by the narrow and crooked mazes of the world’s pleasures and cares.

“It is as we remove from the world, and withdraw ourselves from its cares and pleasures,—it is in the departure of our faculties, and the hazy distance of old age, that the ONE object of our existence here towers up to its true proportions.

The Distant View

“We then perceive, perhaps too late, how much more great, and excellent, and beautiful *that* was, than those paltry intervening things which screened it from our eyes so long.”

Near the foot of the hill, the *camino real* turned to the left, so I followed a bridle-road which ascended it more directly. This way, which deeply scars the steep hill-side with several channels, seems as if it must have been worn by the footsteps of many ages, and was probably once the principal road; but it is now almost deserted, the great road, which slants more easily, having drawn the old traffic away.

From the brow there is a fine view of Seville the Marvellous, with her hundred graceful spires, gathered, as in a drawing-room of churches, around their giant and majestic queen. A silvery bend or two of the river gleamed, folded on the purple bosom of the plain. I sat down, partly because I wanted to take a sketch, and partly because I was out of breath with toiling up the rise, and felt a slight pain in my lungs. However, I managed to draw my breath better than my landscape. But the pain in my lungs had reminded me I was mortal, and liable to accidents; and, indeed, when one is alone, and far away from help, a very slight ailment is sufficient to act upon the imagination. So, before proceeding further, in order to be prepared for the worst that could happen, I wrote, as legibly as I could, a short notice in the fly-leaf of my pocket-book, setting forth, in a proclamatory style, “who I was, and what was to be done with my body, in case it should be found by well-disposed persons, who would be handsomely rewarded,” &c.

Proceeding a little along the road, I came to a small village, where I inquired my way to Castilleja de la

Castilleja de la Cuesta

Cuesta of a crusty old man, who, finding I came from Seville, scolded me severely for coming so much out of the right road, as if it was anything to him. What disconcerted me more than the snarling of the old man was, that all the dogs barked after me as I passed through the village, indicating that there was something peculiar and suspicious about my appearance.

The aloe-bordered lane into which I had turned ran along the brow of the hill, and after about half a league descended into Castilleja, a pretty little village (where Fernando Cortez departed this life, as I since found in the guide-book, which I should have done better to study before I set out), in a hollow of the *cuesta* (hill-side). Here I met a beggar, and asked my way to Santi Ponce. Reflecting that I should not have inquired of such a person if I had overtaken instead of meeting him, I amused myself by fashioning the reason why into a *refrain* :—

No preguntes tu camino
De mezquino—
Que quiza has de tenerlo
Compañero.

Never, in asking your way,
Question a tatterdemalion,
Who, on informing you, may
Offer to be your companion.

Turning to the left at the lower end of the village, the path slanted across abruptly-undulating spurs of the *cuesta*, down toward the plain again ; and descending upon Cama, the tall towers of Santi Ponce's convent appeared about four miles to the north. I had heard that there was a little village about half a mile beyond the convent, and there I

Santi Ponce

resolved to sleep. As I stepped along briskly (for I was beginning to feel very hungry towards my usual dinner-hour), the sun gradually descended; the shadow of the western range widened across the plain, and rose like a deepening flood of darkness, leaving only the church-towers and *atalayas* † illuminated; and by the time I reached the village, twilight had drawn its rapidly-deepening film over all the broad valley which *Bætis* waters.

Santi Ponce is a poor-looking, low-hutted hamlet, sprinkled on some knolly undulations of the plain. Many of the small houses are flat-roofed, and it has rather the look of a desolate little eastern town, than of a European village.

I had to go right through it, running the gauntlet of women, children, and dogs in great numbers, to whom I afforded a fertile source of speculation, remark, and rebark. At length I reached the *posada*, at the further extremity of the place, not in any street, but facing the open country. There was a large doorway without a door, inside of which the vestibule looked very much like a waggon-shed. Further in appeared a long narrow room—if room it could be called, the walls being of rough unplastered stone, smoke-blackened, like those of a forge, and the window without glass.

This receptacle, such as it was, proved to be the kitchen of the establishment, and the family were seated at supper round a table at the further end. A flaring little lamp lit up the swarthy faces of the party, making their dim shadows waver upon the walls. Altogether the scene was more picturesque than comfortable.

I walked up to the table and saluted them with “Dios guard’ V^mdes, Caballeros” (God keep you, gentlemen), and proceeded to make inquiries what there was to be had

† Moorish watch-towers.

Una Limitada Cena

for supper. The landlady, to whom I was referred, apathetically announced that there was nothing whatever in the house ; but the rest of the party supping, begged me to be seated, and sup with them. The elements before them were nothing more than bread, and a large salad-bowl with some remains of lettuce floating in much vinegar and water, dotted with little yellow blebs of oil. I was too hungry to stand on ceremony, and sat down at once. They gave me a great hunch of bread and a wooden spoon, and I followed the example of the company, dipping in the dish and eating the sopped bread, with such shreds and tatters of lettuce as I could fish up with my spoon.

When all the *verdura* (green stuff) was finished, the bowl was passed round, and one after another tilting it up, took a long drink. One of the men, as he put it down with a gasp, remarked that it was a capital thing to refresh the blood (*rifrescar la sangre*).

My hunger was by no means satisfied ; but examining the table more narrowly after the party had risen, all except myself and the *mozo de la cuadra* (ostler), I discovered a small plate covered over with an inverted saucer. This concealed treasure was a fractional reserve of *olla*, set aside for the supper of the landlady's little girl, as I discovered without much compunction after it had been devoured ; for I fell upon it without asking questions, though it smelt and tasted powerfully of garlic. The landlady now bethought herself to ask me if I would have a *jarro* (pitcher) of wine and some olives. With the aid of these accessories and more bread, I managed at last to replenish the vacuum which a long walk (about twelve miles) had caused in my vitals.

The *jarro* held more than I could drink, so I shared it with the *mozo*, a polite, hard-featured man, who seemed

Bacalao

above his station in point of intelligence. He spoke French, and said he had been exiled for his political opinions, and had lived at Bayonne.

It was beginning to be cold, and they lighted a blazing fire; not in any fire-place, but on the mud floor, opposite the window, which aperture had more the effect of blowing the smoke about into all parts of the kitchen than of letting any out. Meanwhile a large party of exceedingly outlandish figures in *zamarras* (fur jackets), and sheepskin breeches, and red stockings, and leggings of *panno pardo*, had arrived, and were busy about preparing their supper.

They produced a certain number of what, by the uncertain firelight, seemed to be triangular pieces of thin board. These they stuffed into the flame, and held them there a little while; then taking them out, and bending and breaking them up, I discovered that they were dried fish, which they were singeing thus to soften previous to stewing. I asked what it was called, and being told that it was *bacalao*, rejoiced greatly that I had at least seen what Don Quixote supped upon in the *venta*, the first night of his *Primera Salida* (first sally).

These men told me they were come with several *carros* (waggon) of wool from Estremadura, and, hearing I was an Englishman, concluded I was going to the copper-mines at Rio Tinto. They admired my *manta*, and asked where it was made, and what it cost.

I asked if I could have a cup of chocolate before I went to bed. The *mozo* went out and bought a cake, and the *posadera* made it in a copper pot, stirring it with a stick stuck into a nicked wooden wheel at the bottom, which she trundled,—rolling the protruding handle between the palms of her hands. The chocolate was good, but as to going to bed, that was not feasible, for there was none.

The Straw-Loft

The unusualness of the requirement appeared from the fact, that by this time the greater part of the wool-carriers were strewn about here and there on the mud floor of the windy vestibule ; some of them without even a *manta* to lie upon. I did not feel that this would exactly suit me, and began to make inquiries about the straw-loft. "Oh yes, there was a *pajár*,—would his worship like to inspect it?" A ladder was brought, and set up against a wall in the stable-yard, up which went the polite *mozo* with his flaring lamp, and I followed.

A straw-loft does not sound an uncomfortable place to sleep in ; and if you have long straw, you cannot be better off : but the straw here was short, that is to say, cut into bits about half an inch long, to mix with barley, and my prospect for the night's accommodation looked more like a great heap of loose chaff than anything else. The ostler remarked that it was "una condicion muy suelta para acostar" (very loose stuff to lie among), but, if I liked to sleep here, he would get a couple of sacks to lay over it. The slightest touch loosened and sent rustling down an avalanche from the crumbling heap. We strewed a plain below, and spread the two broad sacks. I drew my plaid over me, the *mozo* bid me sleep well, and, taking away the lamp, left me to my reflections.

The *pajár* had a doorway but no door, and the aperture afforded plenty of fresh air and a favourable view of the constellation Cassiopeia. I was, nevertheless, quite warm enough, and should have been in perfect tranquillity but for the fear of chopped straw falling into my eyes, nose, and mouth, if I stirred otherwise than very gingerly. Still, to set off against this drawback, there certainly was some romance in sleeping in a real straw-loft, a dream of adventure I had never put in act before.

Theory of Romance

Indeed, when I contrast my English experience of hostelry,—when I call to mind those civilised abominations, the tap, the coffee-room, tea and muffins, and mutton chops ; wound up by a simpering chambermaid, a carpeted staircase, a japan candlestick, and a chintz four-poster,—I cannot but remark a very striking difference between this picture and that.

And in what does the romantic consist, but in unfamiliarity ? It would be as much a romance to the beggar to be clothed in fine linen, and treated, by some mistake, as a great lord, as for the great lord to dress himself in rags, and try the life of a beggar by way of a change. The only difference is, that one changes for the better, the other for the worse. The advantage in point of romance is clearly all on the side of the beggar.

This is the reason why heroes of romance are usually born under strong suspicion of illegitimacy, begin as vagabonds, and turn out peers of the realm in the third volume. This accounts for the delight snobs take in writing, and the populace in reading, dark and mysterious romances of fashionable life, which fashionable livers, according to their (wax) lights, find neither dark nor mysterious at all.

Having been delivered of these reflections in the straw, I was falling gradually into that drowsy twilight of reason which intervenes between the setting of the mind's eye and the star-spangled darkness of dreams, when a vivacious discussion was opened in the court below, in which the word *paja* (straw) frequently recurred: pending which I fell asleep, with my revolver under my hand, ready for defence in case of danger.

I don't know how long I had been asleep, when I was suddenly startled by the bump of a ladder against the wall ; and, opening my eyes, saw the constellation of Cassiopeia

Visions not Unratified

darkened by the figure of a man. I sat up with my pistol ready, but he passed by me, and, filling a large *estera* (matting) basket with straw, departed as he came. He had doubtless been the applicant for straw, whom the friendly *mozo* had attempted to persuade not to disturb me, but who had now found the ladder, and come to right himself against such oppression.

Falling asleep again, I dreamed I had been out on some wild expedition in England, and had been brought back quite helpless on a shutter ; that I had been put to bed, and indeed the nurse was tucking me up, when, in stooping to arrange the pillow, her sleeves tickled my nose, on which I woke, and rubbing my nose, frightened away a rat who had been snuffing round my face, probably suggesting the idea of being tucked in. He scampered away, making a great rustling among the loose straw, and I perceived the darkness was growing pale, and that it wanted not above an hour of sunrise. So I did not go to sleep again, and when it was light enough to see, got up and shook myself.

I paid a *peseta* (about 10¼d.) for my supper and night's lodging. After about half a mile of road, I saw on the left of the road some stony excrescences among the olive-trees, towards which I turned up a slope of barley-field. The irregular masses of grouting proved, as I approached, to be undermined and perforated by arched cellars and passages. Scrambling in among these ruins of Italica, I found, at length, the amphitheatre, which is oval, and not near so large as a modern bull-ring.

On the side by which I entered, there were remains of a broad passage, vaulted with a semicircular arch, which had once surrounded the amphitheatre, into which there were entrances from it very much like those of a *plaza de toros*. Here, no doubt, the Roman youth of the period loitered

Ruins of Italica

between the acts and smoked their *cigarillos* (or did whatever in those days corresponded with this modern *délassement*), while the last wounded gladiator was dying behind the scenes, and made their bets while the next pair were buckling on their armour. The broken terraces of stone seats remain, but the grass grows green, for the benefit of a few scrambling goats, in the arena.

It is natural to fill up the blank gap which time has made with imagination's reproduction of the gaiety, eagerness, and agony of victims who bled, and crowds who shouted, where now reign the silence, and solitude, and ruin of near two thousand years. But what prevented my indulging very long in these musings on the past was, that I began to be very hungry for my breakfast ; so scrambling out of the city founded by Scipio, and the birth-place of Trajan, I returned to the road, and, following it still to the northward, came before long to a small *venta*, with a broad shed of thatch, supported on posts in front of it.

Here I found a woman sitting over an earthenware *copa* of charcoal, and asked for breakfast. She set bread and wine, and a great pie-dish full of large salted sardines, before me. Cold fish is a favourite food of the poor people here, and with excellent bread (which you get everywhere in Spain I believe, but especially in the neighbourhood of Seville), a few olives, and a jar of decent *manzanilla*, my cold sardines were by no means a contemptible breakfast, for which I paid five-pence.

While I was eating, a soldier came in, and I had a sort of vague impression that this road-guard would find me in the wrong some way, and take me up. He turned out a good-humoured fellow, coming, not on a domiciliary visit, but with the same object as myself,—to get his breakfast. He and the landlady had a considerable gossip, of which I, being

Pious Salutations

a novelty, formed the staple subject. You will perhaps be surprised at the *ventera's* taste, but I can assure you I overheard her remark that I was a very pretty youth, “y que rubios tiene los cabellos” (and what nice red hair and beard). Now, though I was obliged to her for the compliment of thinking me a pretty youth, I don't so much appreciate having my hair called red. As to my beard, I have been accustomed to consider it of a somewhat ferruginous straw-colour ; but my hair is brown, and has never been called red by my bitterest enemies.

The soldier, before I went away, civilly insinuated that he should like to see my passport, and was highly delighted and edified by the engraving of the arms of England, and those of Lord Palmerston. “For the writing, he could read the letters,” he said, “but as to the words, being written in English, they were far from being perspicuous : and, indeed, he had been informed that there was no language in the world so clear and intelligible as the Castilian ;” to which the *ventera*, as if she was assenting to an ingenious philological theory, replied, “*Mas claro*” (doubtless). They settled also, between them, that I was, without doubt, a pottery-man from the English porcelain manufactory in the Cartuja convent.

I now bid the *ventera* and *militar* “quedar se con Dios” (remain with God), and they bid me go under His protection. These pious salutations and farewells are in everybody's mouth. If two men meet on the road, each says in passing, “Vaya V^{md.} con Dios” (may your worship go with God). If you pass a man standing by the side of the road, you cry, “Dios guard' V^{md.}” (God keep your worship). The same salutation is good on entering a *posada*, only you put their worships in the plural (V^{mdes.}). They reply, “Venga V^{md.} con Dios” (may your worship come with God). And

A Judgment upon Parsimony

when you depart, your farewell is, "Queden V^{mdes.} con Dios."¹

Soon after leaving the *venta*, I turned off the main road along a bridle-way slanting to the right, and leading to a village with a white tower. The path was crossed by a stream six or seven yards wide and a foot deep. A peasant appeared unforeseenly, and offered to carry me across for a halfpenny; but I thought it would be derogatory to my vagabond character to accept his services; so, taking off my shoes and stockings, and doubling up my trousers, I waded in. About the middle I found it rather deeper than I had calculated, and in twitching up a corner of my plaid, which was trailing in the water, one of my shoes dropped, and was floating away in the ripples, when, making a dash for it, I lost one of my socks, and gained the further bank only one dry foot better than if I had walked through. The peasant whose services I had rejected grinned over my misfortunes as a judgment upon my parsimony.

I shook the water out of my shoe, and wrung the sock as dry as I could, and sat down on a sunny bank scruffing my feet in the warm sand; for dry sand will soak up water as it does ink, and supply the place of a towel as well as blotting-paper. By the time I had made and smoked a *cigarillo*, the powerful sun of January had dried the sock to a wearable state, and I proceeded to the village of the white watch-tower, whose name is Algaba, which, passing without adventure, I came after a while to the banks of Guadalquivir.

It now became matter of debate whether I should ascend the river to Alcalá (which was now in sight, but much further off than it looked, because of an awkward bend of the river, unless I could find means of crossing it in two

¹ *Vmd.* and *Vmdes.* are contractions of *Vuesa Merced* (your worship), and its plural,—pronounced *Usté* and *Ustedes*.

The Ayes and Noes

places), or descend it to Seville. I was beginning to be footsore, and felt dusty and unclean. On the one hand was the desire of adventures ; on the other, the desire of washing, clean linen, and rest for the soles of my feet. Alcala del Rio, crowning a steep bank, was not without attraction to my eyes ; but the noes had it, and I turned down stream towards the Giralda, which seemed nine or ten miles distant.

While I was wandering wearily along the bank, a boat came ploughing up the stream with a fresh breeze full behind a great belly of white canvas. The steady, easy-going motion made me wish to be on board, sitting at leisure to be blown along to fresh adventures. Not long after came another, and I had more than half a mind to hail her, and see whether they would take me up to Alcala.

Against this project there was the uncertainty whether they would go as far ; whether the wind would not be contrary in the next reach, and whether they would stop for me if I asked them. Besides which, it was to be considered that I was weary and footsore, and in want of washing and clean linen, and should probably be still more so, and still less fit to prosecute my adventures on the morrow, when I might find myself, perhaps, quite knocked up, at a considerable distance from home.

These considerations only lasted long enough for the boat to sail by ; and by the time she was fairly out of my reach, I was very sorry I had been so irresolute and prudent. I determined that I was destined to go by a third and luckier boat, for which, however, I did not think it wise to wait here, in case it should never come. Continuing to approach Seville by the bank, I came at last to a reed hut. Here were an old man and woman, and a little boy about twelve.

The Fisherman's Hut

They were sitting round a smouldering wood fire, which burnt upon a circular mud hearth, sunk in the floor like the mouth of a well, and about a foot and a half deep, so that the edges of the floor served to sit upon, while the feet of the family rested upon the sunken hearth. They made me welcome, and the fisherman asked what he could do for me. I said I was waiting for a boat to take me up to Alcalá, and should be happy to avail myself of the shelter of his roof, and should be much obliged to him if he would stop the next boat for me, whether up or down stream, for I was indifferent whether I went to Alcalá or Seville.

I got a drink of water, and lay down on a great heap of nets, which would have been a more comfortable couch, but for the cork floats. The fisherman went out to watch for sails. His wife was stitching away at a very ragged pair of trousers belonging to the little boy. It appeared, nevertheless, that they were his best; for, during the operation, he sat shivering without any, and encouraging his mother to make haste.

I asked her whether her husband caught many fish, and what sort, and whether he made a good living. She said "that they were very poor and wretched now, because *el buen Dios* had sent no rain." I did not see precisely how dry weather could make them poor; but she continued: "When the rains fall, and there is a fresh in the river, then the *savalo* (shad) comes up from the sea in great plenty; but now the river is so low, he can catch nothing at all."

Having answered my questions, she began to interrogate me, in return, as to my nation, and what I was. She admired the good condition of my clothes, saying they were *muy decentes*, so that I was evidently not shabby enough for a real vagabond. I rested in the hut about two hours, when, as no boat appeared, I took my leave of the picturesque

Genuine Goodwill

hut, and its equally picturesque inhabitants, giving the old woman a silver *real*.

This sum, which is a shade more than twopence-halfpenny, seemed to strike the whole family in heaps of gratitude and astonishment. The old woman said they had done nothing to deserve it, and the fisherman begged me to let him put me across the river in his boat, that he might earn it with some shadow of justice. But the shortest way to Seville did not cross the river here, so I begged him to accept it *amistosamente* (in a friendly manner), and he might put me across in his boat some other day, when I returned on my way to Alcala. I had previously won the little boy's heart with a few *cigarillos*, so that I departed with a greater mass of genuine goodwill and hearty benedictions than I suppose are usually purchased for twopence-halfpenny.

Cutting across the fields to another angle of the river, I passed it in the ferry-boat, and trudged home to Seville, where I arrived in time to dress for dinner. My landlady, Juliana, had almost given me up for lost, and Señor Vasquez, my Spanish master, had afforded her very little consolation, merely *carambaing* about the rashness of Britons, and the ruffianly character of the natives in the neighbourhood of Seville.

After dinner, I went, as usual, to get my coffee at the casino, where my friends raised their eyebrows some inches at the recital of my adventures. One of them wondered why I had not told him, and he would have taken me in his carriage-and-four to see the ruins of Italica. But Ramon Ponce de Leon, who is a young man of some genius, and of an adventurous spirit, said it was an "*expedicion muy graciosa* (a very quaint expedition), and it was natural I should wish to see the sort of life of which I had read in Don Quixote and Quevedo"; an idea which most of the

Civilisation in Seville

party seemed scarcely to see the force of when it was explained. The romance of their lives is generally to become as European and un-Spanish as possible. It is one of the privileges of imagination to perceive the romantic element in what is familiar. Perhaps the greatest triumph of the genius of Cervantes was in laying the scene of the best romance ever written in the immediate neighbourhood of his own home.

We adjourned to the opera, and saw the troublesome *Suppositi*, which is wearisomely popular.

CHAPTER X

SEVILLE, *Feb.* 9, 1852.

As this was the day I expected Harry, I was determined not to go to the *orilla* (quay) early, for I felt sure my impatience, waiting on the spot, would prevent his arriving. I had inquired, in my morning walk, what was the steamer's hour, and determined to hit it exactly. Rushing down at the appointed moment, I found my informant had told me wrong ; the boat had arrived a quarter of an hour.

On the quay (down a broad, sloping causeway, railed off from the public) there was a pile of luggage. A remnant of passengers yet bustled around it, arguing, struggling, and bargaining with a contentious company of porters. Alas ! Harry was not to be seen among them. There was still a chance ; he might be one of the passengers who had got ashore before my coming down, and I was just preparing to rush back to the city to ransack the hotels. Just then, an internal convulsion shook the swarm around the luggage pile ; out burst a little Gallego, staggering under a huge British portmanto, and followed by its much-desired and now almost despaired-of proprietor.

I saw him come bowling up the slope with his familiar gait, evidently unconscious of my presence, and wearing that sturdy and almost hostile demeanour with which a true Briton marches into a strange city, through the army of officious importunates, who never fail to welcome the

The Arrival

true Briton's arrival. As he passed the barrier, he came close to me in the crowd, still without recognising me, though straight before his nose, for I was dressed in the costume of the people. I touched his elbow, and he turned upon me with a look of impatient defiance, thinking me one persecutor more.

How quickly the expression changed, and to what, I leave you to imagine. We rushed into each other's arms, as much as the many great-coats slung over his shoulders, and the deep folds of cloak in which I was enveloped, would mutually permit. Then, saying more than a thousand things in a breath, or rather in no breath at all, we set off in great glee for my lodgings, forgetting, in the excitement, the poor little porter who was following us at full trot, panting and puffing under the heavy portmanto.

After dinner, we sallied forth beneath the stars, to see Seville by moonlight from the top of the Giralda. Having come to where that wonderful wand, lifted by the magic hand of the Moor, points whither all pinnacles, whether of mosque or cathedral, do point, however much the way to heaven may differ on the lower story, we entered the dwelling at its base, where some of the family were going to bed. A young man got ready a lantern, and leading us through a sloppy back-kitchen and other damp premises, preceded us up the succession of inclined planes which ascend the tower.

Imagine an interminable sloping gallery in the wall, corkscrewing round and round the tower, or rather square and square, with landing-places at the corners, and here and there large niches, where two arabesque arches, divided by a slender column of glittering marble, let in the night, thwarted by the graceful balustrade of a jutting balcony.

The dark ascent of the echoing corridor,—the cloaked

Ascent of the Giralda

figure of our guide ahead, with the moving, downcast flare of his lantern on the stony slope,—these richly-framed, momentary pictures of the enchanted, moonlight-sprinkled city, as from glimpse to glimpse it sank beneath our feet, and exposed a widening rim of hazy horizon ;—all these things together struck us with that delicate impression of the mysterious and romantic which is so difficult to put on paper, or even to describe afterwards with spoken words. We were content to explain ourselves to each other by agreeing that it seemed like one of the Arabian nights.

Well, there is an end to all things, even to square corkscrews, and at last we emerged where the muezzin used to cry, "*La ela illa Allah*" (There is no God but *the* God), and where now the most powerfully unmusical jangle of bells in the world ring at random hours without any ascertainable rule or intention whatever. Looking down over the dizzy parapet on one side, we could see here and there little cloaked mannikins crawling over the straitened pavement ; on the other, also far beneath, expanded the broad stone roofs of the body of the cathedral, whose massive flying buttresses, touched by the moonbeams, seemed the hoary ribs of some old mammoth skeleton.

Around, irregularly grouped clusters of quaint, fantastic housetops and towers and gables strung like charms on tangled street-lines, extended a chequered labyrinth. Along the dark line of the Guadalquivir lay the white range of Triana. On this side of the river, but still distant, the bull-ring looked about the shape and size of a quoit. On the left, near the foot of the tower, stood the rich Arabesque alcazar of the Moorish kings of Seville. Beyond, spread a vaster edifice, square, covering five or six acres, and seeming a palace too. What do you think it was ? The tobacco-manufactory. Isabel II. is the sole tobacconist

Seville by Moonlight

in her realm, and as all its denizens are her customers, she must do a very pretty business.

Beyond the orange and lemon-groves of the *Delicias*, the watery serpent coiled away along the plain, with here and there a distant reach that caught the silver of the skies. Going round to the east side of the tower, where, by the way, we came out but did not stop (deeming, with that restless impatience to which humanity is prone, that what first presented itself must be least worth looking at), we beheld in the far horizon the converging ranges of the Sierra Morena and the mountains of Ronda. The dim intervening plain was dotted here and there with bright towers, that rose against the slanting rays. The moon was full, and such a moon ! We singled out the loftiest point in the horizon, part of the Sierra di Ronda, whither to direct our steps when we leave this place. We have determined to take no guide, but to ride from peak to peak, always selecting the most ambitious land-mark we can get sight of, and trusting to Providence for supper and adventures.

CHAPTER XI

SEVILLE, *Feb. 21, 1852.*

WE have just come in from a midnight ramble through the streets, with vistas, and clair-obscures, and shady angles, and salient corners, and arches, and columns, and twinkling lights, and serenaders with tinkling guitars, and *senoritas* robed in white, waving cambric kerchiefs from balconies, and watchmen crying, "Ave Maria puriiiiisimaaaaa," to a narrow strip of stars peeping down between the leaning eaves.

We are to start now in a day or two, having got our beasts of burden. Mine I bought of a baker, a good trade to buy a horse from! Why?—He is likely to be the better bred. I cannot describe him now, but I dare say I shall have plenty to say about him on the road. He is a charming, vicious little black beauty, and the livery-man, who has the charge of him, says he is a "demonio" in the stable.

Harry has got a more peaceable chestnut; both seem good and sound. During these our last days in Seville, the population has been in a hubbub of rejoicing for the queen's happy delivery from her physicians and priest; it cannot be ascertained from which she ran the greater risk, since her constitution (can it be a Spanish one?) has weathered both.

As a humane way of rejoicing for the queen's escape, there was, among other things, a bull-fight; and, like

The Bull-Ring

naughty, cruel wretches, we went to see it. Bull-fights have often been described ; I will, therefore, endeavour to make mine as short and disgusting as my powers of condensation will admit.

An arena about a hundred yards in diameter, girt by a sloping amphitheatre, and half surrounded above by arched and columned galleries, is filled by twelve thousand men, women, and children, all impatient. A score or so of men, arrayed in scarlet and yellow and purple and pink and green and blue, embroidered and laced and frogged and tasselled and tagged with gold and silver and silk, are strutting about upon the sand.

There is a flourish of trumpets. A door is opened in the wooden barrier, which defends the lower benches of spectators, and in rushes a broad-nosed, innocent, astonished-looking bull. He looks here and there, and round about him, and has every reason to be surprised, if not alarmed. The men in gaudy colours at first keep a respectful distance, and observe whether he is very fierce ; then the boldest of them goes forward. The foolish bull now thinks he has discovered his principal enemy, and canters towards him with the full intention of playing cup and ball with his body on the points of his horns.

As the bull reaches him, he flings out his cloak and skips aside, so that the horns impinge on nothing but a cloud of floating drapery. Sometimes it is carried away on the points, and the disappointed beast shakes it off his face, and gores and tramples it in the dust. The other men do the same as the first, with more or less agility, and there is a good deal of running about and jumping over the barriers, into which the pursuer comes full tilt. The public are soon tired of these first performers, who are called the *burladores* (jokers) or *chulillos*.

Burladores and Bandarilleros

Then come in the *bandarilleros*. Each man has a pair of barbed javelins, wreathed and rosetted with gay-coloured strips of paper. The first performer places himself in front of the bull, standing with his heels together, and leaning slightly forward; he waves his rustling wands, something in the manner of lagrace sticks, or as if he were fortifying his challenge by some magnetic spell, for he points his weapons toward the forehead of his antagonist, and traces mysterious diagrams in the air.

The bull, as if some superstitious element in his character were awakened by these exorcisms, usually pauses some moments to contemplate this double-wanded wizard, the first man who has faced him yet, without the aid of that bewildering volubility of cloak. At length the bull starts like an express-train, and the *bandarillero* runs lightly forward to meet him, like a dancing-master in pumps caught in a shower. As they meet, he skips nimbly aside on light fantastic toe, planting in the same instant his pair of *bandarillas* on either side of the poor beast's neck. The rest do likewise, till he has a great stiff mane of javelins tossing up and down as he plunges about, bellowing in great agony, with the barbs working in his flesh at a great leverage.

Then another flourish of trumpets, and in come the *picadores* on their blindfold steeds, wearing a broad-brimmed stiffish wide-awake with many-coloured plumes, their legs cased in buff-leather and wood, entrenched in a tall but-tressed fortification of saddle, and armed with a stout lance. One of them challenges the bull, poising his heavy weapon under his arm. The bull butts at him, and receives the lance's point between the neck and shoulder. The point is guarded so as not to pierce more than an inch or two; there is then a desperate pushing bout, the man and bull

Picadores and Matador

thrusting for safety and for vengeance at either end. When the struggle lasts long it is called "dormir sobre el palo" (to sleep upon the stick).

At last the bull either goes away disheartened, or forcing in the *picador's* guard, gores the horse deeply in the flank as he swerves away. The other *picadores* do likewise. The noble, patient horses go on at this work, bleeding bucketfuls all the time, and some of them with their torn-out entrails in festoons, till they drop down fainting from loss of blood. Lying flat they do not bleed so fast, and recover their consciousness to receive an occasional lift from the sharp horns, as the bull in pursuit of his persecutors recognises in his path the corse of a fallen foe.

When the bull is getting tired the company call for the *matador*. He is the smartest of the party. He marches solemnly forward to make his bow in front of the president's balcony, throws away his hat, and goes forth to slay and make an end. His victim, sated with fruitless victory over superior numbers, and weary of bloodshed, has to be provoked with many flouts and indignities before he will deign to engage in this single-handed and, seemingly, insignificant combat.

At last he comes. The *matador* whips a long gleaming rapier out of the scarlet flag with which he draws the beast's attention to his left, while, stepping to the right, he plunges his sword through the left shoulder down into the heart. For a few moments the bull staggers about, snorting little crimson clouds, seeming bewildered by the new sensation of dying. He soon feels how it is, and goes majestically down on his knees, with his bold, broad face of honest defiance towards his destroyer.

The butcher now runs up behind, and strikes him with his knife in the back of the head: the spine is separated

Our Feelings

and he rolls over and dies. A flourish of trumpets—a buzz of twelve thousand voices criticising his end—and a team of four mules abreast are harnessed to the carcase. They gallop out, while the music sounds again, dragging by the heels along the sand the Hector of the ring, leaving a long wake of dust-cloud behind.

So it ends, and begins again. Some of the bulls are more savage than others. One declined to fight, and the indignant populace called for dogs to worry him. Another, in making a sudden turn upon his enemies, dislocated his spine and lost the use of his hind legs. The poor creature could not tell what was the matter, and struggled about with his forelegs, dragging the paralysed remainder of himself along the ground.

We sat and smoked, and were not so much horrified as would suit the ideas of a British public, nor so much excited as would flatter a Spanish one, but we were occasionally both one and the other to a moderate degree. They say that this is child's-play, because the bulls are feeble and tame now in the cool weather. After all, in spite of the atrocity of the thing, it is a fine sight, and there is enough of the savage, wild-beast element in the heart of man to make these desperate and bloody struggles interesting to him.

What I felt to be more objectionable than the bloodshed was, that the bull had not fair play, nor any chance of escape. Besides which, poetical justice demanded that there should be a fair equivalent of men killed in proportion to the horses. I felt, at the time, I should have liked to be a good, strong, active bull, aware of the stratagems of the art, to have made havoc among the gaudy bullies ; and I believe we should have shouted with all the rest of the company if one of the human wretches had been caught

Fireworks

and mangled. However, it is fair to say, that there were no men hurt, and if there had, our human would probably have overpowered our brutal sympathies.

As we are prepared to set out in a day or two, heavily armed with pistols, and determined not to surrender except to overwhelming numbers of banditti, we thought it prudent to sit up last night to make our wills.

This evening fireworks were let off from the new iron bridge over the Guadalquivir, which is to be opened to-morrow. We, with a large party of our Spanish friends, saw everything to great advantage from a barge on the river. Such a mass of many-coloured fire on the dappled mirror of the flowing waters, with dark, crowded boats glancing here and there athwart the burning ripples; the shores around all hung with myriad lamps; and the planet Venus, like a permanent rocket-star, looking down over the eaves of Triana on the perishable efforts of pyrotechny—altogether resulted in what is familiarly termed a striking scene.

The other day, we and some other Englishmen got up a *funcion* of gipsy-dancing in the court of a great building on the bank of the river, originally erected, I believe, by an embryo gas company, which was rendered abortive by a combination of the Sevillian oil-sellers.

Terpsichore is not my favourite muse, and I found it rather melancholy mirth. The dance is a barbarous Oriental gesticulating wriggle; the performers stooping, swaying their bodies, and waving their arms, and clacking their castanets to the sound of the guitar. It was a picturesque scene, but the weather and the spirits of the party were rather cold. The gipsies made us taste the victuals we had provided, under an impression that we were about to make them eat roast dog, and would not get tipsy

The Gitanas

as was expected of them in reason as well as rhyme. The gipsies of Seville differ but little in appearance from the Spaniards, except that the men are more hangdog-looking, and the women plainer than usual ; their complexions are perhaps a shade swarthier.

Their singing is like any other wild, barbarous, melancholy howling, fit to mingle with the murmurs of a dreary wind whistling through an uncomfortable tent on the corner of a wilderness. A plaintive gusty wail, with long quavering cadences, that begin loud and die away to nothing. It reminds one of the crying of a child, which, weary of the monotony of plain prosaic weeping, begins to play with its lamentation and fashion it into the rude resemblance of a song. I have heard semi-barbarous women among other Southern nations, who, when almost delirious with grief, bemoaned themselves in a sort of chanted rhythm—the earliest type, no doubt, of elegiac poetry.

CHAPTER XII

UTRERA, *February 24.*

THE world keeps whirling round, and remote contingencies come to pass almost by waiting for them! How distant and improbable it seemed two months ago that we should ever make this expedition, which I used to talk about with faithless enthusiasm like any other castle in the air. Then Harry actually came, and we set about our preparations. Even then, how far off our start appeared! How impossible to get suitably mounted at a purchasable figure among the cheateries of Andalusian *chalanes*, whom it is impossible to persuade that one is "Yorkshire too!"

Here, as everywhere, the old impression pervades that Englishmen are (very loosely) made of money, and continually dropping to (gold) pieces. However, we got ourselves up in costume, and attended the beast fair in the Plaza de la Paja twice a week, and bargained and turned up our noses at the animals, and stimulated a patient confidence that we should meet with what we wanted at our own price in good time, and, in the end, got a couple of useful ponies for about eight pounds apiece.

Then they had to be fitted with trappings, and we led them through the streets to a variety of saddlers' shops, where we tried on and bargained for the necessary articles of apparel. Then there was the packing—which to me is always two-thirds of a journey's fatigue—in this case aggra-

Our Get Up and Set Off

vated by the harrowingly dubious separation, of things absolutely necessary on the road to go in the *alforjas*, from the chaos of a voluminous portmanto, containing almost all my worldly goods of any importance.

However, one after another, all things came about : and on Tuesday, February 24th, with our voluminous cloaks and plethoric *alforjas* over our shoulders, many pistols in our *fajas* (scarf-belts), and all got up in the thorough *contrabandista* style, we sallied forth from the *numero tres segundo* Calle de Velasquez, where I had lived during my sojourn of four months in Seville. We wended our way across the vast dismantled gap in the heart of the city, left by the destruction of the great convent of San Francisco, and came to the stables. We had a slight altercation with the livery-man, a fat thief, who wished to charge us for more days than our ponies had been in *pupilage*.

It was about ten o'clock of a bright, warm morning, when, aiming at the Puerta de Carmona, we hit that of La Carne, and therethrough sallied forth upon Spain at large. Having studiously avoided to study the maps and guide-books (which we, nevertheless, carried with us, in case of need), we rode directly towards our favourite peak in the horizon, conversing—*à-propos* of our late brush with the stableman—on the most effectual way of dealing with Spanish louts. In this controversy, Harry advocated the sharp and decisive sternness of an assumed superiority, and I a mild and persuasive gentleness ; so it was agreed that, in our next difficulty, I was to shine first, and if fair weather failed, then he should thunder afterwards.

Passing, in discussion, the dark-green, golden-dotted orange groves and spiry cypresses which encircle the city, we came to a little bridge with a great hole broken through its arch, and, strange to say, workmen mending it. Then,

The Dehesa

fording the Guadaira below the dam of a picturesque mill, we reached, after a mile or two, the edge of the *dehesa*, or wilderness. Here we picketed our ponies,—that is to say, we drove an iron spike into the ground ; and to that spike there is a ring, and through that ring there is a cord ; which cord, being tied at about seven yards' length round the pony's neck, allows him to graze with much more fresh air and liberty to sweeten his vegetable diet than ever the prisoner of Chillon had.

Not satisfied with this, however, my little black beast must needs break away, and pulling up his spike, scamper back towards Seville, whose spires and towers still appeared in the distance. The other pony followed his example, and we ran after them.

I will leave the whole party running while I tell you why we stopped on the margin of the *dehesa*. If you ever were a bad little boy run away from school, you will know that the first thing one does on emerging from one's immediate troubles, upon the world at large, is to stop and think. We had broken loose from the trammels of society, disguised in a strange garb, with ponies to carry us wherever we chose, and were about to realise the romance of many dreams.

We had besides to load our pistols (for we were full of ideas of the dangers of the road), to arrange our saddles, and cloaks, and *mantas*, which, in the hurry of setting off, had been badly organised ; we also intended to take a sketch of the last appearance of Seville. In Spain, the preface to everything is a *cigarillo*, a little squib of tobacco rolled in thin paper, which it takes a man of average talent six months to learn to make. We had just accomplished this delicate operation, and were about to light, when the ponies ran away, and we after them.

Flight of the Ponies

We had not gone far, though far enough to see clearly that they could go much faster than we could follow, when the thought of our innocent and helpless *alforjas*, left a prey to any ravening marauder who might cross the wilderness, brought us up short. Harry went back to guard the baggage, and I followed the ponies, expecting I should have to go back all the way to the livery-stable in the Calle del Viscaino.

At the picturesque mill I heard they had re-crossed the Guadaira at full gallop, and I trudged along beneath the sultry sun of February, in much despondence and perspiration, till I happened to think of the broken bridge, where the workmen must have stopped them. So it turned out, for soon after I was met by two of them leading the truants. They had got their saddles turned round, and each had trampled off one of his stirrups.

Having tried in vain riding the one to lead the other, I led them back, and arriving hot and breathless within half a mile of our encampment, I was startled by the report of a pistol in that direction. Approaching cautiously, I could see nothing of Harry, and the terrible idea flashed across my mind that robbers had found him alone guarding the baggage, and had shot him. Then it occurred to me, that when they found two *alforjas*, they would presume he had a companion (who might institute a search, unless also disposed of), and were therefore perhaps lying in wait among the low brushwood to shoot me also as soon as I should come within range.

I therefore approached by as open ground as possible, that they might not get too easy a shot at me; and when I came as near as I thought safe, I shouted his name. After an anxious moment or two an answer was returned in well-known accents, which relieved me from my apprehensions. Still the shot was to be accounted for.

A Horrible Suspicion

Has your imagination prepared you for something dreadful? *Mine had—something like what follows.*

I approached the spot, and found Harry sitting among the cloaks and luggage, smoking; but I saw in an instant, by the expression of his face, and the nervous twitch of his lips, which made the cigar-end shake, that something serious had happened.

“I have been and done it, and there he lies, poor fellow; but it was his own fault.”

“Good heavens!” I exclaimed, as, turning where he pointed, I saw, at about seven yards’ distance, the foot of a man sticking out of a plot of brushwood. “Good Heavens! is he dead? What is the meaning of all this?—what has happened?—and here is another saddle!—and what is that grey horse?”

“I will tell you; but, in the meanwhile we had better pack our beasts, and be off as quick as we can. I was sitting here about a quarter of an hour ago, when this man came riding across the *dehesa*, and seeing me, turned this way. I had loaded my long pistols, and had one of them ready cocked in my hand, under a fold of the cloak I was lying on. After asking me a good many impudent questions, which I answered with as much patience as I could, he said, at last,—

“Ah! I see you are a foreigner, probably on a long journey. *Es regular que tienes dinero* (it is to be supposed you have money). That is what I am come for, with your permission. I am Pedro Paredes, for that which your worship may please to command—a notable bandit, at whose name the civil guards tremble.’ Saying this, he unslung his *escopet* from the hinder peak of his saddle, and dismounted, to take a steadier shot, in case of need.

“Instead of getting up, I pulled the saddle-bags and

Something Like What Follows

cloaks into a heap, and lying on my stomach, presented the muzzle of my pistol over the battery. 'Now then, you impudent rascal,' I said, 'lay down your gun and go away, or I'll shoot you, before you can coax your rusty old piece to go off; and I should advise you never again to try your hand on Englishmen with English pistols!'

"He hesitated, and turned pale, and was stepping back, when I said, 'If you move without leaving your gun, I fire. Here, I have the advantage—at a distance, you might.'

"'No English dog shall make a jest of the Andaluz,' he said, a sudden fury flushing his face. He presented his gun as quickly as he could, and we both fired at the same moment; but my pistol had been on his heart during the discussion, and through his heart it went. But I had a nearish escape: look at the rim of my hat."

Sure enough, there was a round hole in the broad upturned brim of the *Calaniés*.

"Thank God you are no worse, but what are we to do?"

"We had better leave him as he is; he has fallen with the gun clutched in his hand. If we don't disturb him, and they find him after a day or two, with money in his pocket, and all those silver buttons on his clothes, they will think he has destroyed himself; I have unsaddled his horse, and turned him loose. He will probably stray away, and not attract immediate attention; we must throw the saddle and bridle into another bush. There now—we had better put earth between us, as they say."

I could easily perceive that he was deeply shocked, though the excitement gave a sort of painful levity to his manner.

Before mounting, I went to look at the corpse, the first I had ever seen of one who had died a violent death. He had staggered backwards and fallen flat on his back, his

The Bandit's Corpse

arms and legs stretched out ; one hand grasped the barrel of his musket, and the other a bunch of slender *palmita* stems, whose fan-like heads, rustling to the almost imperceptible breeze, seemed as if the dead hand stirred them. I bent aside a bush of rosemary which shadowed the face. One eyelid was propped up by a rosemary sprig, and the eye beneath still glared upwards with a glazed and stupefied look of fierceness and terror. In bending the bush back to look into his face, I had stirred the sprig, and at first it seemed that he was alive. However, letting go the twigs in my horror, I saw how it was.

He was a fine, broad-built young man, with marked and striking features, denoting, however, more strength of passion than intellect. The healthy sun-burnt browns of his swarthy face were turned to ghastly yellows on the bloodless and ashy skin. The bright-coloured facings and glittering silver tags and brooches of his dress, too, added a painful contrast of holiday splendour to the faded hues of death.

We mounted and rode away, following a bridle-road which led us shortly into the olive-farms, which are crossed in all directions by a great variety of sandy tracks. We kept our direction as well as we could, and met nobody, which we thought lucky. At length we came to a road which seemed larger and more important. This soon split into two at a picturesque, but apparently deserted *hacienda* (homestead), and as we could not see our peak in the undulating country in which we were, we tossed up a broad ounce-piece of gold, whether we should take the right or left.

The left one won, which looked sinister ; but we took it, and rode along till we came to a great road, which must evidently be a *camino real*. On this we had not gone far before we came to a *venta*. Here we asked how far it was

The Road by Twilight

to Seville, and found it was only four leagues, Alcalá de Guadaíra being about half-way on the great road.

We wanted to stop at the *venta* for the night, but they had no stables, so we got some bread and wine to satisfy the cravings of hunger, and hearing there was a town two leagues further on, we determined to press on, though it was near sunset, and we should have a good way to ride in the dark. The woman at the *venta* stared at us a good deal; so, taking pity on her curiosity, I asked her confidentially what she took us for, and gave her full liberty to guess as many times as she chose.

“It appears to me that your worships are without doubt French *caballeros*, and it is regular that you travel with perfumery; but I never saw Frenchmen with so many pistols and poniards.”

“We are no Frenchmen, *señora*, but English artists, at your service; and pistols and knives are to an Englishman indispensable necessities of life.”

“There are not so many of the ‘*mala gente*’ about now since the *Guardia Civil* are so rife on the road. *Vamos!* do you not take the rest of your loaf with you?”

“It is much at your disposal—remain with God, *señora*.”

“The English are of a truth very rich and noble—may your worships go with God, *caballeros*.”

As we rode on, the sun soon went down, and the dusk deepened rapidly. We were joined by a man on an ass, who entered into conversation.

“By your speech, *caballeros*, I should say you were not of these parts; are you not afraid to travel on these roads after dark? There is a formidable band which greatly infests the neighbourhood of Utrera. They robbed a traveller last week of three hundred dollars.”

Pedro is Missing

“We are Englishmen, and therefore afraid of nothing. We carry pistols enough to shoot ten men, and if there were a dozen, it is probable the two others would run away. We are on our way to Gibraltar, and if anything were to happen to us, the governor, who of course expects us, would immediately shoot a bomb-shell over La Mancha into the Cortes at Madrid, which would blow up all the Spains in one ruin.”

“Ha! ha! you talk roundly; but we know the English are a dangerous people, and it is asserted that they season their *ollas* with gunpowder instead of salt.”

Here we heard voices behind, and a sound of horses' hoofs. Our companion hailed them with some cry which we did not understand, and as our imaginations were prepared for robbers, we took it for a signal, and concluded that the man on the donkey was an accomplice sent on to reconnoitre. We therefore had our pistols ready. Two men on a white horse, emerging from the darkness, overtook us, and shortly afterwards another horse, also with two men on it, came up. We congratulated one another on this arrangement, for two bodies close together would of course be much easier than one to hit in the dark. However, the men saluted us civilly, and fell into conversation with our companion. They were coming back from a fair at Alcala de Guadaira, and were slightly elevated. Harry and I were talking to one another in English about the probabilities of thier being thieves; and it is a sort of axiom with the lower classes here, who are not much used to foreigners, that people, who talk to one another in a language which *they* do not understand, will not understand what they say to each other in plain Spanish.

“What has come of Pedro that he does not return with you?” said the man on the ass.

Our Profession

“*Quien sabe!* probably he dances with *fandango*.”

“According to my view,” said one of the men on the second horse, “he is engaged in another affair. I saw him watching a horse-dealer as he put up the price of a very pretty chestnut mare—sixty-three dollars, and not dear either : I think Master Perrico has an eye to the gentleman’s purse.”

“Hush ! these strangers may overhear you.”

“By no means, you hear their tongue is not the same as ours. Gentlemen,” he continued, addressing us, “is it long that you travel in Spain ? ”

“Three months, and my companion three weeks.”

“Indeed, so little, and already you speak a few words of the Castillian. What may be the business on which your worships travel ? ”

“We are portrait-painters, very much at your service,” replied Harry.

“At what price do you work ? ” said a man on the white horse, which was a little ahead.

“From three *reals* to six, according to the size ; and if the work of art does not give satisfaction to the sitter, he can leave it, and pay nothing.”

“*Carajo!* that is an exceedingly honourable way of dealing ; and if these gentlemen do not leave Utrera very early to-morrow, I will have my picture, and give it to my wife, *carajo!* ”

“We are entirely at the disposition of your worship, for that which your worship may please to command.”

In such discourse we began to see distant twinkling lights, and to hear the chiming bells (*las animas*), which were ringing for the departed souls of Utrera,—for that was the place on which we had stumbled in the dark on our south-east passage. As we rode up the long straggling

Anxious Inquiries

street, the white horse stopped before a house, out of which came two women. One embraced her husband, as he dismounted ; the other, who seemed young and beautiful, as far as the dim light of the street (which only came from a few straggling windows and stars) allowed us to judge, after glancing anxiously about among the horsemen, exclaimed,—

“Where is my Pedro ? Why have you not brought him back to me !”

“Do you expect me to carry your pet hawk on my wrist, pretty Rosita ?”

“I don’t know what can be the matter with Rosa,” said the elder woman, “she has been moping and fretting about her Perrico all day.”

Here we said good-night, and rode on, still hearing indistinctly through the thickening veil of darkness the maiden’s eager tones of inquiry after her lover. It was evident she had felt some mournful presentiment of his fate, which we but too probably connected with our adventure of the *dehesa*. We went, as we had been recommended, to the *Posada de la Spada* (Sword Inn), were received as distinguished guests, supped on a clean tablecloth, and were recognised by the ostler in the stable, when we went to see our ponies fed, as having passed a year ago. This we did not deny, but applauded his memory.

CHAPTER XIII

MORON, *February 27.*

THE reader will easily imagine we did not wake very early next morning. I had sat up till very late writing after a hard day's work. We both awoke suddenly, and found a couple of *carabineros* standing at the foot of our beds. We started up, thinking ourselves arrested; but it appeared they had only come to inspect our passports, which were shown, and found satisfactory. Harry handed a paper of *cigarillos* to them from under his pillow, and they began to smoke.

There was another tap at the door, and in walked a tall, long-nosed, bushy-whiskered man, with sharp eyes, glancing rather furtively from beneath dark shaggy eyebrows. We soon recognised him by his voice to be the master of the grey horse, who had bespoken a portrait over night. He begged, with a profusion of politeness, to have the pleasure of receiving us at his house, which was entirely at our disposition, where we might proceed to business. He seemed slightly uneasy in the presence of the soldiers, and as soon as we told him that we should wait upon him after breakfast, he decamped, with a sort of half-slink, half-swagger. When he was gone, one of the soldiers said,—

“May I be pardoned for my curiosity in inquiring what business your worship may have to transact with that man?”

Our Dreams

“Simply to take his portrait in water-colours,” replied Harry. “You see, by our passports, we are travelling artists : we met casually on the road last night. Is there anything against him ?”

“Why, not exactly against him, for there is nothing proved ; but he is shrewdly suspected of having a hand in two or three murders, and a dozen robberies or so. But he is sly—indeed, he may be said to know some few points more than the devil,—and we have never yet been able to lay our hands upon him.”

With this the *carabineros* made their bows, and departed. Over our breakfast we compared notes on our dreams. Harry had been taken up before the *alcalde*, and received sentence of death. I had dreamed that Harry was shot, and that I sat by his body watching the blood come bubbling out of a round wound in his breast so fast, that the whole *dehesa* was flooded, and turned to a great sea of blood ; and then the body turned into an island, and I was the corpse lying upon it. Though I was dead, and in a very ghastly state, lying stark and stiff, I could see perfectly well that a shallop, with a gleaming sail, came towards me over the vermilion sea, and I lay still, knowing that——was in that shallop. It neared, and touched the rocks,—she recognised the corpse, shrieked, and fell into the sea. I, entirely irrespective of my social position as an inanimate body, started up, and dived to the rescue, in which inappropriate act I awoke.

We went, after breakfast, to our respectable friend’s dwelling. Harry drew him, and I persuaded the mournful Rosita to let me take her. She was more beautiful than we had any idea of in the dark the night before—large, deep, black, flashing eyes, and the richest mass of glossy raven tresses. The fault of her face was in the size of her nostrils,

The Robber's Affianced

and a somewhat fierce expression, which from time to time flickered about the corners of her mouth.

She was sad now, mostly, for she was afraid something had happened ; but now and then a thought would cross her of her Pedro's having gone to visit a certain Conchita, whom she usually mentioned by the uncomplimentary nickname "La Zorra" (the she-fox). She talked in a rambling sort of way, everything that came in her head all the time I was drawing her, and answered all the questions I put with perfect freedom. It appeared that she had had a most severe quarrel with Pedro the night before he had gone to Alcalá, and after it had dreamed he was dead.

While I was colouring the portrait, there arose a sound of voices outside, and drew nearer. The women were out in a moment, and we followed. Four of the Guardia Civil, with a horse, were surrounded by a crowd of men, women, and children. All were eagerly pressing round and peeping under the gay Valencian *manta* which covered the horse's burden. We were just in time to see Rosita dash frantically through the crowd, and tear off the *manta*.

She shrieked with a more terrible cry than I heard in my own bloody dream, and fell among the horse's feet. The body of her lover was slung across the saddle, with its head and feet dangling on either side. They had found and recognised the body, and corded it over the horse's back ; but the stiff arms and legs stuck out awkwardly ; and, indeed, it was a very horrid sight.

In the hurry and dismay of our host's establishment, we disappeared unobserved, and as we had not been paid, we thought it no robbery to carry away our drawings.

We set off shortly for Arahal, and rode by an old convent, through olive-groves, until we came to a bare, arid, undulating plain. The road skirted the mountain range at

Calmness is Catching

about three leagues' distance. We rode along, conversing on the strange romance in which we had so unforeseenly become implicated, and congratulating ourselves that we had got so well out of it.

Getting tired of the monotony of the road, and the uncomfot of our rude, straw-stuffed pads, we dismounted, hobbled our ponies' fore-legs with the *trabas* (a soft woollen bandage in the manner of a cow-tie), and sat down to smoke by the wayside. During this operation Harry's pony tried to roll, and broke his *traba*, whereupon he calmly observed, that this escape would probably form the adventure of the day. To this I agreed; but suggested, that as our troubles and trials would probably come soon enough, we had better finish our pipes in peace, before we made any overt demonstration of catching the little beast. This apathetic conduct turned out well; for the pony soon entangled its legs in the trailing bridle-reins, and was pounced upon by his master. We continued our course and shortly saw Arahah, an unremarkable white town, on a slight eminence. Harry asked me how far I thought it was, and I guessed it about three or four miles.

"It is further than that. Do you see that turnip-field on the knoll, which is, if anything, nearer to us than the town?"

"Yes—very plain."

"Well, that turnip-field is an olive-garden, and the turnips are great olive-trees."

We now had passed the shoulder of the mountain spur, and behind it we saw a town, to which we resolved to direct our steps as soon as a road branched off to the right, which we surmised could not be long; but there was nothing of the kind till our arrival at Arahah. As we rode up the hill into the town the sunset was gilding the ruined arches of

Arahal

the broken-down, but not ancient, church, and doing its best to make this unpicturesque place as pretty as possible ; and it succeeded very well, for, after all, everything depends on the light you see it in. The broad valley between us and the mountain range was all filled with golden splendour, which burst in upon us through gaps in the straggling street.

We got to the *posada*, and ordered supper. While it was cooking we studied the guide-book. Here we discovered that the town we had seen at the foot of the mountains was Moron, a celebrated den of thieves ; and that the next town on the way to Ronda was still worse, no other than the notorious Olvera mentioned in the proverb—“ Mata al hombre y ve te a Olvera ” (kill your man and get you to Olvera) ; being the most safe and congenial refuge for the desperately wicked, which Spain could afford. However, we congratulated ourselves that if we had less safety we should have all the more adventures. At supper, being very hungry, we ate ravenously of fried pork : which, for want of a sufficient peptic pause before going to bed, gave me an indigestion, and made me quite unable to eat any breakfast next morning. I, however, foreseeing that I might be hungry further on in the day, sallied forth, and bought a small loaf, a few oranges, and a bit of Dutch cheese, as a provision for the way.

We were, to the best of our judgment, over-charged by the host of the *posada* ; and when we made our indignant protest, he appealed to a most sinister-looking personage with one eye, whom we at once had picked out of the assembly round the chimney corner, as the captain of a band of robbers. This impartial umpire at once took the side of the *Senor huesped*, and I thought Harry and he would have come to blows. In the end we, of course, had to pay.

We are Worth Many a Button

As we were departing, the bandit captain inquired if the buttons (with which we were profusely ornamented) were silver, and this settled our conviction that we should be waylaid this day, if any. Everything seemed unlucky. I felt sick and ill; and, as I was leading my pony, which kicked and reared, and was very unruly, out of the market-place, my *alforjas* rolled off his back. A man, who came forward civilly to hold it on again, remarked to the crowd how heavy it was; and as they always conclude that Englishmen are laden only with precious metals, this would, of course, afford an additional incentive to the marauders of the district. We, however, had all our pistols ostentatiously displayed in our *fajas*, and tried to look as fierce as we could, in hopes they might think us dangerous.

We descended the hill and mounted. So full were we of the idea of robbers, that we seriously suspected a poor man, with a donkey laden with pipkins, whom we overtook on the road, of being in some way or other implicated in the conspiracy against our lives and property. The road across the valley was not very clear at best, and in crossing a puddly stream we missed it.

After wandering about some time we came in sight of a miserable hut; hard by there was a miserable little garden, and in the garden a miserable little man, hoeing languidly. To him we shouted, but got no reply; as I felt sure he must have heard us, I rode up in great wrath, and began to upbraid him for not attending when he was spoken to.

Thereupon he left his cabbages and came up, looking very timid, half-witted, and sickly. We inquired our way to Moron, and he offered to put us in it. I, seeing he was about to make a job of showing us the way, began to speak sharply to him; but Harry said he was evidently a poor wretch on whom some coppers would not be thrown away,

The Most Benevolent of Medicos

and we had better let him show us. The man, seeing he had an advocate in the enemy's ranks, immediately began to beg, and to state a very piteous case, of which ague and want of money were the principal ingredients.

Harry had provided himself in England with lots of drugs to physic the barbarians, and here was a case. He immediately jumped off, pulled his medicine stocking out of the *alforjas*, and began studying his receipt-book of cottage-physic and cookery. Making a desk of his saddle, he stood turning over the leaves. "How to make suet dumplings!" that wouldn't do. "A good receipt for brewing beer at threepence a gallon," &c. ; but nothing was said about the proper way of treating tertian ague. Hereupon I was called into consultation, and I suggested that, "an he had never tasted blue-pill before, it should go near to remove his fit."¹ So Harry discharged a raking fire of blue-pills upon his patient.

"But," said the poor man, "I cannot buy your remedies, for I have nothing," and he seemed greatly distressed by the idea of losing these wonderful little bullets, on whose sovereign merits we had been lecturing him.

"Never mind that," said Harry ; "we require no money from those who have none ; but it is the custom of English professional men to cure everybody who is sick."

"God will repay your worship, most benevolent of *medicos*," said the invalid, with a meek and lowly reverence.

I added two-pence in copper, to give the prescription a flavour of sincerity, for I thought that, perhaps, upon reflection, he might be afraid to take the pills from unknown hands, for fear they might prove poison. The huge blue-pill-box was replaced in the stocking, and we proceeded by the instructions of our patient. It was about two o'clock,

¹ "The Tempest."

The Moor and Cid

and I was beginning to feel hungry and weak, having been inwardly deranged all the morning.

About half way to Moron we got off and sat in a ditch by the wayside under the tall green spikes of the aloe. Here I ate some of my loaf and cheese, but not the oranges, for reasons which I will not explain. On the contrary, I seasoned the simple aqueous contents of my bottle with fifteen drops of laudanum, which, with the concurrence of the "most benevolent of medicos," I ventured to prescribe for myself.

While I ate, and Harry smoked, my pony observed a great herd of horses feeding in the *dehesa* at about a quarter of a mile off. He got his feet out of the *traba*, and galloped away. Harry had bought a new one at Arahall to supply the place of that broken the day before, so that the Cid had to follow the Moor with his feet tied, for the new hopple resisted all his efforts. He, however, managed to go a surprising pace, much quicker than Harry could run after him. I, being an invalid, lay still to await the result, and of course expected to be attacked in Harry's absence on the model of our former day's sad experience. We have christened Harry's pony the Cid, and we intend to christen, or rather paganise, mine when we discover the name of the Cid's principal antagonist, for which we are not sufficiently extemporaneous historians. In abeyance, mine is provisionally invested with the general title of "the Moor," sometimes Othello, for short.

After a while, Harry returned with the ponies. He had been helped to catch them by two horse-herds, who were tending the flock of horses. The Moor had been received with kicks and bites and all sorts of indignities by the society with whom he had amiably desired to be better acquainted. The Cid, who was an older hoof, had not

Moron

galloped so confidently into the fray. We proceeded, and were within about a league of the broad-topped citadel of Moron, when the Moor became unruly and troublesome, and in the little misunderstanding which ensued, my saddle slipped round and rolled me off. The bridle, which I still held in my hand, also slipped off, as tugging hard with outstretched nose he got his ears squeezed through and galloped away.

Harry, who had just had a good deal of trouble with the ponies, and who had a just right to complain of my management in letting the little beast get away (for I had lost my temper over the Moor's troublesome caperings, and laid about his head and ears with my switch), did not say anything about what I ought or ought not to have done, but with great patience and good humour galloped back on the Cid after the runaway.

I carried his *alforjas* and mine to a little gully in the *dehesa*, whence, through the rustling reeds and palmitas, I could see the ramparts of Moron. I wrote my journal, and grubbed up what I supposed to be a palmita-root with my *navaja* (clasp-knife).

When I had eaten it, I found by the top that it was a sort of lily, which might be rank poison for anything I knew; for, in my anxiety to get at the root, I had neglected to examine the leaves, which bore only so slight and general a resemblance to those of the palmita, that I wondered how I could have been so stupid. I then did a little sketch of Moron, as it appeared through the reeds, which carried me on without impatience to Harry's return with the ponies.

We rode up into the town, which is quaint, antique, and compact, and got to the *Posada de los Caballeros*, a very good sample of a queer old massive *posada*. The stables

An Artistic Proclamation

were a dark, low, heavy-vaulted, round-arched sort of cloister-crypt. After seeing to our horses, we ordered dinner, and sat waiting for it in a long deep gallery (something like the Rows of Chester), which ran along one side of the crooked little courtyard.

To wear away the time, we got out our sketch-books, and tried to get the crooked angles, and nooks, and crannies of the tenement into perspective. *Apropos* of the sketch-books, I delivered from the gallery a neat little address to the courtyard, informing all whom it might concern that we were celebrated artists from London, come to take the portraits of the beauty and valour of Moron, at from three to six reals, and that any one who wished to have a portrait must give notice over-night; otherwise, we should depart early, and Moron would probably never again enjoy a similar opportunity.

We dined on eggs and salad, and bread fried in oil; then went out, and turned up the main street, which rises with a gentle slope to the foot of the castle-hill. At the end of the street, and below the castle, is a nice-looking church, whose tower reminded us faintly of the Giralda. Thence the ascent of the mound is very steep climbing. The castle is a vast ruin, the remains of a Moorish one patched up by the French, who occupied Moron three years.

The sun had disappeared before we got to the top, and the faint glow of the western sky was fading rapidly away on the spires and towers of the town below us. We wandered round the lofty ramparts, which commanded on one side the deep blue mass of mountains, and on the other, the vast expanse of undulating, variegated plains, darkening away to where the Sierra Morena mingled with the sky.

Venus came forth like a brilliant afterthought of sunshine, and all the jewelled company of heaven appeared in

Sleeping in the Saddle

the order of their magnitudes and dignities at the levee of their radiant queen. The dim lamplight, too, began to flicker through the windows of the town below, and the night-winds sighed coldly from the snowy mountain-range.

I am getting sleepy, and must go to bed,—that is, I must lie down as I am, wrapped in my cloak, on a complicated substitute which I have laid together on the floor. The saddle turned upside down, and eked out with a folded plaid, forms the bed, and my *alforjas* the pillow. Good-night !

P.S.—In spite of the unpromising preparations I described last night, I slept well till near daybreak. Then, feeling rather cold, I got up and shook myself, and went down-stairs, where I found a crowd of muleteers lying about in the court on their *mantas*. I got the great archway-door open, and went up to the castle to see the sun rise.

The morning was cold, as I sat at the top of the great tower, while Phosphor faded in the flushing east ; and the mountains, peak after peak, were touched with amethyst lights, while the baby day crept along the plain. And at last the sun arose from behind the mountain-range, and cast the tall shadow of Moron across the land, almost to the horizon ; but as the chorus of all the cocks grew louder, the shadow shortened.

So I went down and gave a feed of barley to the ponies, and ordered chocolate, and wrote this postscript. Harry is getting up. He has been terribly bitten by fleas. He had a mattress, which, in consideration of my being an invalid, he wanted me to sleep on ; but I liked my own inventions better, for it was a suspicious-looking article. Harry is so disgusted with the fleas, that he will not stop here to paint a customer who called last night to order a portrait. The chocolate is ready.

CHAPTER XIV

RONDA, *March 1.*

FAIRLY in among the mountains. In among the toppling crags, that lean with rugged elbows on the brink of rushing mountain-streams,—and glass their overhanging brows in dark clear pools,—and dip long-trailing branches down to catch the floating flakes of froth that slowly sail on oily-dimpling eddies round and round.

In among the tall, majestic giantesses of the prime, who awfully look down through leagues of filmy distance on the green winding valleys and ravines of the fairy-land they guard. To woo them, clouds, those vague and mournful bridegroom-ghosts, exiled from their native ocean-plains, come trooping sullenly before the shrill host of Æolus, and here find refuge.

Here they throw their long pale arms around the stately maidens of the Sierra, on whose broad bosoms pillowed, they weep themselves away. They perish, but leave a noble race of rivers that, in the pride of youth, and led by an inborn instinct, leap joyously down to the sea. There they enlist among the turbulent billows, that clap their hands with a shout, and wrestle with the blast, till, slain by a treacherous smile of sunshine, the thin and vaporous ghosts are dispersed and driven away to revive, Anteus-like, by the touch of their mother earth.

In order to mislead any of the blood-hounds who might

Roderick Dhu

be upon our track, leaving Moron, we inquired for Saucejo, and set off by the map and the sun's guidance for Olvera, which lies in the contrary direction. We left the Rosa Spur to the right, and plunged into the heart of the hills. After winding in and out and up and down rugged, and, in places, almost impassable roads, which in the metaphoric idiom of the country are called *caminos de perdices*,¹ freely translated "paths to perdition," we found ourselves in a wild, solitary, picturesque valley, where it was often difficult to distinguish the way from the bed of the rivulet by which it ran.

As we were threading our way with cautious steps, among the boulder stones, we saw a cloaked horseman overtaking us. As he came near we saw he had an *escopet* slung behind his saddle. We immediately settled that he was the Roderick Dhu of a numerous band, and expected him as he approached to blow his bugle and raise a crop of bristling muskets from the thick brushwood which surrounded us.

He turned out, on nearer inspection, to be an amiable young squire who was riding to overlook a farm of his father's, called "La Gallina," after which this beautiful valley was named. I gave him a cigar and his heart opened. He praised our ponies, and pressed us to bait our horses and *descansar* (untire) ourselves at his farm. I got him to tell me the names of the various beautiful and fragrant shrubs which clothed the vale and scented the gale; a whole family of barbarous Arabic botanical names, such as *retama*, *lantico*, *lechera*, *tomillo*, *aelfa*, &c., which I took down in my pocket-book, with notes for subsequent descriptive scenery.

Our friend turned off to his farm, where the valley widened and a grassy knoll was dotted with park-like

¹ Partridge roads.

Olvera

trees, a striking contrast with the wilderness surrounding it. We dived down a ravine which seemed most in our direction, and came, after much rough winding work, upon the picturesque *venta* of Zaframogon, where we baited.

We rode on along this charming valley, which had now a better road. Indeed, we had missed the best road in the morning, and had been struggling through inconvenient but very beautiful by-paths all day. On a green hill slope, we saw a little boy and a bull-calf playing at *matador* and *toro* to an audience of five cows and a cow-keeper. The boy had a stick to represent a sword, and as the calf bobbed at him he stepped aside and poked the stick at his shoulder. The cowherd seemed much interested, and alternately cried, "*bravo spada*," and "*bravo toro*," as the sword or bull got the best of it. Oh, seeds of bloodshed sown in infancy!

We topped a high level of mountain road and saw Olvera, a pyramidal group of spires and towers crowned with a pointed castle-rock. It seemed much nearer than it was, for about half a league brought us to an unforeseen deep, broad valley, whose sides had to be gone down and up before we could get to our resting-place.

The flood of sunset was beginning to break in billows of fire over the ragged sky-line of the mountain summits as we crossed the valley, overtaking troops of peasants and donkeys crowding in from the field: and when we reached the foot of the long, steep ascent into Olvera, there must have been a hundred and fifty men, women, and children, to climb the hill with us. The road ran straight up the mountain's flank, from which the stony ribs protruded. Higher and higher, the stony excrescences grew larger and larger; first as big as waggons, then as haystacks, then as houses, and at last churches.

At the top of a mile of steep climbing, the straight road

Works of Supper-Arrogation

became a corkscrew-staircase-street, winding in and out among the huge-protruding hulks of rock, patched here and there with buildings, which seemed in comparison as small and frail as cobwebs in a quarry. After another half mile of this corkscrew street, still steeper than the road, we came to the market-place, from whence we saw the castled crag still towering high above us. However, we were luckily at the end of our day's journey, for here we entered the Posada de la Plaza.

It was choke full and in a great bustle. The stable, moreover, was, if possible, still fuller, and indeed two mares had to be turned out somewhere else to make way for our ponies. My little black stallion made a tremendous uproar on going into the stable; and in passing them no doubt very much shocked the nerves of the unprotected mares who were so ungallantly turned out for his accommodation.

I gave him his barley, but instead of eating it he kept pawing and whinnying over the sore backs of some peaceable decrepit old mules, at another *entero*, who snorted back contemptuous defiance in return. I left him to go and provide our own supper; and after my manner when I am hungry and impatient, began to order everybody about in a great hurry, speaking with much authority.

The landlady seemed impressed with the necessity of making an effort towards getting our supper ready, but the landlady's son, who acted also in the capacity of *mozo de la cuadra* (ostler), set up his bristles and said, "Who is this man in the garments of a muleteer who gives himself the airs of a *gran duque*, that the suppers of all our guests should be postponed for the convenience of his belly?"

"I am an English gentleman, and hungry—therefore, though the sun and moon and all the planets were brought to a stand, I must have my supper, and that presently."

A Fellow Countryman

“An English gentleman ! that alters the case greatly. I judged by his lordship’s accent in speaking the Castilian (which, by the way, his lordship speaks *perfectamente*), that his lordship was an Italian. His lordship will be glad to hear that there are two of his countrymen arrived here this evening : another lord of Gibraltar similar to his lordship, attended by a pretty young gentleman, who shall perchance be brother to his excellency. They have a supper in preparation, *muy rico* (very rich), partridges and rabbits, with a dish of eggs and bacon ; there will be well enough for all four, and it will be a pleasure to your lordships to sup with your countrymen.”

He did not wait to hear what I had begun to grumble about my having seen a considerable number of English in my time, and indeed the mention of partridges and rabbits almost balanced that natural antipathy which an Englishman usually feels to encountering another Englishman anywhere, but especially abroad.

My eye naturally followed the now obsequious *mozo* as he elbowed through the crowd towards a dark recess in the chimney-corner. I felt sure there would be some awkwardness from the exceedingly vicious principle on which our self-constituted ambassador was about to act—viz., that Englishmen meeting with one another in a far country must be glad to see one another and eat at the same table. Therefore, feeling that it was better to be impudently than bashfully intrusive, I followed up my *corps diplomatique*, and emboldened also by hunger, approached the awful strangers.

The *mozo* had stopped on the great hearth to rake up some embers which smouldered dimly round a huge rooty log something of the size and shape of a sheep (and, indeed, with the heterogeneous company of sticks around it, it

We Fraternalize

reminded me of Isaac and the ram caught in the thicket), and was giving, in a sort of casual manner, an account of our arrival. Meanwhile the twigs, which did not understand being raked at for nothing, took fire, and by the blaze I saw the little group in the corner.

A tall, lathy, good-looking man of five-and-twenty, dressed in the dark *zamarra* (lamb's-wool jacket) and black-leathered riding trowsers, black silk *faja*, and a jaunty *calaniés* of the last fashion, sat smoking the *cigarilla* of patience, and watching a stout earthen jar among the embers before him. His companion, who fully came up to the *mozo's* description, as "a very pretty young gentleman," seemed about fifteen.

He was apparently wearied with the day's journey, and leaned with his glossy auburn curls spread on the shoulder of the other, who held him tenderly with an arm round his waist, and now and then blew away the smoke, and peeped down into the innocent, sleepy face. He seemed to take very little notice of the garrulous relation of the *mozo*. However, at length he cast his eyes across the blaze, and our glances met.

"Adios, Señor A——; m'alegro muchissimo de ver a Vmd.," said I, for I saw it was no other than A——, who was a great friend of mine at Cambridge, though I have seen very little of him since.

"Adios, Señor," he replied in Spanish; "tambien m'alegro yo, pero francamente no m'acuerdo de Vmd.: tampoco sabré como Vmd. conoce mi apellido."

"Tuve el gusto de pasar dos o tres años de mi vida con Vmd. en la universidad de Cantabrigia y me llamo Jorge Juan Cayley."

At this he started and laughed so loud that the sleepy boy started up, and we shook hands over the fire. At this

A Situation

moment Harry came up, too, who was also a great friend of his. Amid the general ebullition of cordiality, the *mozo*, who had almost despaired of establishing any sort of relations, but now concluded that his representations had suddenly taken effect, conceived it a fit time to effect a coalition of suppers. His suggestions were at once agreed to, and in the meantime A—— introduced to us his younger brother, Juanito, who blushed and shook hands—very soft hands, more like a lady's than a boy's. But I was busy asking A—— fifty questions, and took no notice of that or the blush, and went on.

“Why, I thought you were to have been married to the lovely Lady Jane before this. I heard it was to be in November for certain.”

“So I was ; but she had the scarlet-fever, poor child.”

“And so you left her to recover at her leisure, while you travel about to amuse yourself !”

“Not exactly,—but they are dishing up the *olla*, so let us to supper !”

We supped in a spacious apartment upstairs, whose walls were hung with frying-pans and gridirons, and other utensils of cookery. On inquiry, we were informed by the handmaid, that in the summer families come here from Ronda ; for it appears, that when the inhabitants of the sultry plains are baked out of their cities, and come to Ronda for fresh mountain-breezes, the inhabitants of Ronda retreat to a still loftier level, and this is then used as their kitchen.

It came out, in the course of the meal, as the superior perspicacity of my reader may have anticipated, that Master Juanito (who had got into a great perplexity under cross-examination about Eton, whence he was said lately to have

Something Romantic

emerged, but of which seat of learning he seemed to have preserved very limited and equivocal recollections) turned out to be no young gentleman at all, and, by way of explanation, was, to his great confusion, introduced to us as Lady Jane A——.

“The fact is,” said A——, “Johnny, like most other new-married young ladies, had a strong desire to travel, and do something strictly romantic. I, who had observed, in the course of my European experience, the misery and bother of trailing about a cumbersome train of serving-men and women, immediately laid it down as an irrefragable axiom that nothing romantic could possibly be done with a courier and lady’s-maid.

“I thought this would be final, and that we should have gone down home and improved the place, which has been a good deal neglected during my long minority. I laid out a pretty little programme, in which I was to figure as the gay backwoodsman, and Johnny was to come, stealing like a sunbeam in among the crowded boles, to surprise me with a nice little napkin-basket of sandwiches and grapes; and sit on mossy mounds, singing ‘Woodman, spare that tree,’ while I thinned the timber; which, I am sorry to say, is sadly choked up.

“But Johnny (who is getting a little wiser now from sad experience, poor young man!) at that time infinitely preferred romance to reality. She observed, with some show of plausibility, that she could do without her maid very well (now that her bonny brown hair had been cut short in that cruel scarlet fever); that is, if I could fasten her dress. Now, if there is a strong point in my character, it is an inherent aptitude for fastening hooks and eyes, especially in a small cabin, where there is no room for one’s elbows, and in a rough sea. I, therefore, had my little shrimp of a yacht

By Sea and Land

got ready, and we prepared to do something romantic, upon the corsair model, in the Mediterranean."

"But where have you left the yacht?"

"Why, if it had been possible, I ought to have landed my Princess Dorothea-Micomicomica at Osuna; but as Osuna is among the inland mountains, it could not be accomplished. After we had seen Lisbon, and Cadiz, and Gibraltar, we put in, in stress of weather, into the deep-sheltered rock-basin of Carthage. Here we went ashore; and Johnny was so struck with the gay costumes—which are certainly more picturesque there than anywhere else,—that she must needs get fitted out, as you see, in all the colours of the rainbow; and a nice respectable dress it is for an amiable, interesting young gentleman of sober taste and discretion. Well! after a masquerade or so in the little cabin, with myself and the cracked looking-glass for audience, she was so much delighted with herself, that she thought it a pity not to exhibit herself to all the Spains; so I was forced to buy a couple of mules, and we have been on the tramp ever since."

So far from taking the part of this cruel and perverse husband, we very much applauded what Lady Jane had done, and inquired if the expedition had proved satisfactory. She said it was charming, and she was quite ready to ride all over the world. They had ridden by Murcia, Lorca, and Guadix to Granada.

"The principal romance of the journey was at Baza, where the *posadero's* pretty daughter made most serious love to Master Johnny, so that the young lady's *novio* was terribly jealous, and I thought there would have been bloodshed; for, though you would hardly imagine it of the young man, now he is so mild and modest, after being found out, he then, when his imposture was unsuspected, played the

The Demonio in the Stable

successful lover with a most theatrical and coxcombical swagger, pointing also his discourse with many appropriate expletives, of whose meaning he is wholly unaware, but which he has learnt on the road to introduce with great effect in the genteel, school-room Spanish which he brought out with him. From Granada we are on our way to Seville; to-day we left Ronda. You are now in possession of our history, and we have a fair right to *your* adventures."

When we had lit our cigars, and Lady Jane had condescended to accept a very thin little *cigarillo*, which Harry made up for her, I proceeded to narrate our adventure of the *dehesa*, and was in the most palpitating part of it, when the *mozo* came up in a flurry from the stable, and said that my pony had broken his halter, and was fighting furiously. I left Harry to finish off the story, and went down in among a great crowd of horses, and mules, and asses. My little *demonio* had broken away, and gone to his principal enemy, a large black *entero*, who was luckily tied up rather tighter, or else he would probably have killed the little ninny before I got there. The *traba* was fortunately fast on the latter's fore-legs. There they were, snorting, and whinnying, and biting, and trying to strike one another with their fore-feet.

The Moor, at last, got his manacled hands into a high manger, to which his enemy's head was tied, and had some difficulty in getting them out again. At this conjuncture I rushed in among the fray, and getting hold of the remains of the broken halter round his neck, pulled him down, and drew him struggling, and kicking, and rearing with great vehemence, back to his own barley, and tied him up very tight between a pacific mule and the *Cid*.

Soon after I went up-stairs again the party broke up.

The Sketches

A broad mattress was laid where the table had been ; we rolled ourselves in our cloaks, turning the *esclavina* (cape) over our heads, then, standing at the foot of the mattress, we fell back like tragic heroes, so as not to unswaddle our feet in lying down. We were considerably eaten by fleas. Harry next morning counted forty-two separate bites on one knee.

Accordingly, we got up at sunrise, and while our chocolate was being made ready investigated the little level ground at the top of the rock-city, where there is a large building that contains a church, a town hall, and a school, apparently once a convent. It forms the massive mural crown of the pyramid. We ascended the castle still higher up, and had a fine view of mountain-tops. On our return, breakfast was ready, and the A——s stirring. We breakfasted together, and after breakfast sketched the castle apex, which, from the other side of the *plaza*, appeared high above the *posada's* roof. Here fifty or sixty inhabitants gathered to observe the performance. Lady Jane made a very nice drawing, and we a couple of very nasty ones. The spectators exclaimed with wonder and delight, when *el joben* (the young man) put in what they called his *golpes de maestro* (master-strokes), and kept telling one another, "There is Juliana's chimney ! That is the roof of Pedro's stable !" &c.

We said good-bye to the A——s, regretting much that our routes lay in opposite directions. Down the other side of Olvera, and up over a long bare hill,—so bare that there was not anywhere a scrub to cut a switch out of, and we were about to make a rush-whip, when we found a heap of vine-cuttings for firewood by a hut on the roadside. After a while we came to a *cortijo* (farmstead) picturesquely perched on a rock. Here we learnt that we had missed

Anticipation

our way, as usual, and were going to Alcala de la Calle instead of Setenil.

As we began to climb a very long and steep mountain-flank, a slight shower came on. Looking back, we saw a most striking atmospheric effect. A great shaft of sunshine streamed through the broken clouds upon Olvera's fairy-palace-crowned pinnacle, which gleamed transparent through a spangled robe of showers, girt with the rainbow for a baldrick.

Having stumbled on these remarkable places by accident, and without any particular recommendation, we naturally concluded that the whole mountain region was full of such. What, then, must Ronda be herself, the queen of them all?

Of course, we conceived that the approach to this city of refuge for the smuggler,—this massive ganglion of the rugged and inaccessible paths of contraband traffic,—this lofty-perched eyrie of desperados, would lead us by interminable staircase-roads up precipitous zig-zag ledges to a fortress-crested city, terraced in and out among the jags and chasms of the rock.

But this is not the case. We rode along some wooded table-land at the top of the mountain we had climbed, and after awhile found Alcala in a dip—a dismal, poor, wintry, greystone village. Here we baited. On our way to Ronda we met with nothing remarkable, except a board which set forth that a *caballero* had there been killed by a fall from his horse. The spot seemed eminently appropriate,—a rocky, sudden drop in the road, which, if the road had been the bed of a torrent, would have made a picturesque little waterfall. We rode down it carefully, and without accident.

It began to rain, and we put on our cloaks, which are

Ronda

inconvenient heavy things to ride in, though they certainly keep one dry ; we were rather impatient to get to Ronda before the day ended, and were trotting briskly on, when Harry's pony fell, and he and his beast, all enveloped in a voluminous mass of cloak, rolled among the sand and stones. I expected to have to put up another board ; but he got up, and was no worse.

Still, Ronda did not appear, which seemed distressing, as we could now see a league and more before us, and there was nothing but a great, blank, round-backed ordinary hill, over which our road lay ; and beyond which, from the nature of the ground, Ronda, such as we fancied Ronda, could not possibly be. After an hour's riding we got over the bleak round hill, and descended a gentle slope into a straggling unremarkable town, which might have been a suburb of Bradford. Very much disgusted, we rode down the long sloping street, and came to the Cristobal Posada. Here we put up, and supped and grumbled.

The rain had ceased, and the broad moon was rising like a great fire-balloon above the mountains, the silver of her beams frosted on the snowy summits around. We went out, for it was cold and wretched in the *posada*, and came to the edge of a very deep precipice, which falls off like a tremendous sunk fence from the lower end of the new town. We discovered the celebrated bridge, and looked down through gratings upon a dizzy depth of darkness, where, in the indistinct abyss, a rushing of waters echoed.

The view from the bridge, if we had come upon it in a state of mind unembittered by previous disappointment, might have struck us very favourably ; for the roaring chasm beneath, the broad shadowy valley, sunk six hundred precipitous feet before us, and the moonlit snow mountains beyond, formed, no doubt, a tolerable combination in their

Previous Eulogy Ensures Detraction

way. But we had made up our minds to be sulky, and growled at the whole affair ; saying that the chasm was no better than Knaresborough, and the torrent a mere fiz and gush of soda water.

CHAPTER XV

WE stayed three days in Ronda—descended into the chasm—sketched the flight of Moorish mills (through which, one after another, the headlong torrent plunges down into the valley), and the high and heavy freestone bridge which joins the cleft-rock summits on which stand the old and new town.

There are certainly some “cleverish” precipices hereabout. From the bluffs at the edge of the new town one can throw a stone down six or seven hundred feet into the valley. One day, I was kneeling with my face over the edge to set off paper parachutes, when both my pistols slipped out of my *faja*, and clashed on the rock, within a few inches of the brink. They did not, luckily, go over, for I grabbed them in the nick of time; but it quite gave me a turn, and I gave up letting off paper parachutes for fear of tumbling over myself.

The day before we left, we felt a desire for meat, which we had not eaten for some time, living on eggs and chocolate and salad. We sallied forth to the shambles. It was late, and we only found one old woman. She, however, had a whole sheep, lately killed. We got a choice cut, which Harry carried off under his cloak in his fingers; while I went to the vegetable market over the bridge, and bought half a peck of potatoes. The latter I sliced thin with my dagger, while he haggled the mutton into tatters. He

An Advantageous Opening

subsequently officiated over the frying-pan in a most artistic manner, but the mutton-steaks turned out lamentably tough.

I made acquaintance with a gun-maker, at whose shop I loitered. He admired my pistols. The conversation turned on engraving, and I gave him an extempore specimen of my execution in that department, on a copper coin. He said he could not engrave so well, nor was there any one in Ronda who could: he showed me some of his own handiwork, which was of a very rude character. He took me to be a professional man, and hinted, that if I would work for him, I might make a decent livelihood ornamenting the locks of muskets. He seemed a very good sort of man, and had a pretty daughter.

Riding away from Ronda, it appeared much more to advantage than we had ever seen it before. The old town stands compactly on a moundy hill, behind which the new town is only seen crowning the edges of the precipice; and anybody who wants to be enthusiastic about Ronda, ought to enter it by the way we left it. From Ronda the road rose a good deal, and we got among the snow. Losing ourselves, according to custom, and scrambling along a very rocky little track which skirted the brow of one of the highest mountains, a vista opened downwards through the peaks, and there stood "the Rock," at about forty miles distance. The straits of Gibraltar looked like a great blue river, over whose further bank arose the snowy mountains of Africa.

However, we were evidently in the wrong road, in which impression we were confirmed by a not very lucid peasant, who could not clearly explain which *was* the right way. Another peasant came up, who said he was going in our direction. We followed his guidance down by horribly

Valley of the Xenar

narrow paths along precipice-ledges, into a valley which had no road to speak of, except the bed of the Xenar, but the scenery was very beautiful. On inquiring whether people ever came that way from Gibraltar, he said he had come that way sometimes on smuggling expeditions.

At one time we thought he was leading us into a trap, when he was hailed by a party of men with guns sitting on the hill above us. We were not robbed, and parted with him amicably, giving him a cigar and some copper coins. At a mill, by his parting directions, we went up a very steep zig-zag path into the mountains; and some time after crossed a very deep valley, and climbed, about sunset, hot and breathless, into a picturesque village on the opposite hill-brow.

As we went up the steep winding street of the village, some women asked us eagerly what wares we brought, and seemed disappointed that we had only materials to make portraits. Near the summit of the place stood a shabby old *posada*. The stable was entered by a door lower down the hill, but the communication between it and the *posada* was by a flight of steep, mossy stone steps, which emerged on the higher level of the court-yard, like the mouth of a well. We had some *miga*¹ and chocolate, and fried eggs, sitting in the deep-niched window of a large vaulted room with arched alcoves, whose nooks and angles took picturesque lights and shadows in the fading hues of sunset.

While we were eating, we heard a step at the door, and in walked a serious-looking visitor, with shaggy grey hair; he said nothing, but stood gazing, motionless, with long down-dropped ears, for he was a donkey. He was shortly discovered by the daughter of the house, who was waiting

¹ *Miga* is made of bread-crumbs, damped and salted, and fried in oil.

El Hornipipo

upon us; she instantly flapped a dishclout in his placid, pensive countenance, and he retired without further demonstration of his feelings than slightly shaking his ears.

After supper, when it was dark, we sat by the crackling kitchen-fire. The *medico* of the place (Ben el Aurin) had dropped in to smoke his cigar by the fire. He was rather a prosaic and sententious personage, who had been in Russia with Napoleon. He inquired about London, which he had understood was "not so large as Paris, and that it was all *pedazos* (disjointed fragments), and mixed up with the sea." The women requested to hear us speak English, and then said, "that it was a language which nobody could understand, not even the birds. There were Englishmen came now and then from Gibraltar; there was Don José, a man of great wealth and dignity, he spoke very clear; he came for shooting in the mountains with his son; he was a *sastre* (tailor) at Gibraltar. There were English came through sometimes who could not speak clear at all."

It was evident they had no idea of another language than Spanish in the world, only that some nations spoke it very unintelligibly. The daughters wanted to know if there was any dancing in our country. We told them that our nation had no taste or genius for dancing, and never invented a national dance of its own except the hornpipe, which they were ashamed to dance in the first society, preferring to imitate, in a limp and spiritless manner, the dances of foreign countries, for to dance with much energy or grace was in England thought *muy ordinario* (very vulgar).

They wished to see the *hornipipo* danced, and one of the fashionable dances to compare it with; so I danced what I knew of a college hornpipe, eking it out with fugitive reminiscences of the Highland fling. They clapped their hands to keep time, and laughed, as well they might. Then

Fine Oranges !

Harry and I performed a *valse à deux temps*, which appeared to them still more eminently absurd. After which the old mother struck up on the guitar, and all the company danced the *fandango*.

We slept in our clothes across a very pulicious mattress, and woke with the sun, as he lifted his broad face from the mountain-pillowed horizon. We breakfasted, and departed by a road which seemed a combination of broken pig-troughs filled with melting snow. It soon narrowed to a path not above a foot wide, and my pony took the occasion to slip off backward, and roll with me, end over end, down a drop of about nine feet (it might just as easily have happened to be ninety). I was luckily no worse, and managed to scramble up to the road again at an easier place a little farther on. It is rather a happy accident, as it will probably make the Moor more cautious. He is very clumsy with his feet, and unused to mountain roads. The day before, when we were scrambling on the rocks, off the road which we had lost, both he and I fell head over heels into a small chasm, which luckily had bushes at the bottom.

At last, we got into the regular road from Ronda to Caucin, from which there was another splendid view of Gibraltar and Africa. A league or so after passing the latter place, the road descended suddenly to the valley of the Guadiaro. At the bottom grew some orange-trees, thirty or forty feet high, and thickly laden with gigantic fruit. We had not had any good oranges among the mountains, where only the refuse come in a bruised state, so we called the man who was up a ladder among the branches. He brought us as many as we could stuff into the vacant capacities of our *alforjas*, and we gave him a few *cuartos*.¹

¹ The *cuarto* is a shade more than a farthing.

Shall We Show an Intention ?

The oranges were about five inches in diameter, and excellent. There is a fine, fresh, aromatic flavour about new-gathered oranges from the tree, which those who only know the flat, tasteless, green-picked, box-ripened trash we get in England would not imagine.

We skirted the banks of the rushing Guadiaro—oleander-fringed—by a good road, the first our horses' feet have touched for a hundred miles. Harry cut an oleander switch for his pony, who was lazy, and it proved tough and useful. As we rode along, we began to talk about what we should do in Gibraltar, which there was some possibility of reaching by a hard push this very night. It was probable we should know some of the officers ; but then we were shocking figures in our muleteer's costume to present ourselves in civilised society. To be sure, we had some shabby old trousers and shooting-coats for a change in case of wet in the *alforjas* ; but it was my opinion that we should do better to go in boldly on the strength of our present vagrant character than to make a servile and seedy effort at respectability, which no traveller can pack in less than a heavy portmanto with appurtenances, viz., hat-box, dressing-case, and an umbrella.

Harry was decidedly of opinion that we ought to show at least an intention of respectability, so as not to outrage the sensibilities of British subjects. I argued that it did not signify what one did in this world, so long as the perpetrator himself was not ashamed of it. All awkwardness produced in the minds of persons witnessing odd things said or done, arose from the sense of awkwardness in the person doing them communicated by sympathy ; and that the most extravagant things might be done with impunity, as long as they were done with an appearance of *bonâ fide* confidence.

“People will not abuse you to your face,” he replied ;

Value of Public Opinion

“but you may depend they will not omit to do so behind your back.”

“What people say behind my back I don't so much care for, as long as I have no good-natured friend to report it to me.” Here you see we were launched upon a general issue of a very vague and desultory character.

“What is the consequence of the world's good opinion of you, except as it affects the world's manner of treating you? Now, I am quite satisfied with the world's treatment of me, which I feel confident is fully equal to, if not beyond, my deserts. If people abuse me behind my back, I am consoled by the idea that they also abuse everybody else, and are abused themselves in turn by me and others.”

“If you only care for the opinion of others, as far as you hear it yourself, why should you care for fame after your death, which, or course, you can't hear from anybody's mouth, unless, indeed, you were to make a special injunction to your executors that your body should be eaten by bookworms?”

“I care nothing,” said I, “about posthumous fame. When I am dead, it could not cause me to be asked to dinners and balls, and *déjeûners* and drums, and that is all the worldly use of fame, except the very equivocal gratification which may arise from having one's worst jokes and most maudlin sentiments laughed at, and listened to with as much appreciation as one's best, because one is famous; and we certainly do see pottering old-established reputations who seem to enjoy it.”

“If you don't care about posthumous fame,” said Harry (you see how soon our argument fell plump into personalities), “why do you take care of such a lot of old scraps and papers, which you never mean to publish while you are

What is Fame ?

alive ! Perhaps, you will say, they are not at all likely to add to your reputation after death, and therefore are not to be interpreted into any such design."

"I am an author," I replied, growing somewhat sententious, "and I believe that I live for some purpose, otherwise I should not have been created. If I happen to entertain the wish that when I go from this world I may leave upon the prepared paper of literature, some photographic record of how the world's image looked in through the peculiar lens of my individual mind—it certainly is not out of love for that particular stone which falls heir to my name, and stands at the head of my grave. What would it signify to the mouldering dust beneath, or the disembodied spirit steeped in joy or anguish which no trifle could disturb, to know that innumerable Smiths, and Jacksons, and Thomsons had got into the way, some hundred years after my demise, of making pic-nic pilgrimages to the picturesque churchyard, and eating pigeon-pie over my graven epitaph-slab ? Do you think my spirit would have nothing better to do than come and chuckle unseen, while they scrawled their names upon my monument, erasing a cloud of previous Smiths, and Jacksons, and Thomsons, to make a space for themselves ? This is a true vision of that kind of fame which men promise themselves when they say in their hearts 'we will leave a name.' No—when I am dead, I care no more for my name than for an old hat which can be worn no more. But I would, and I hope I shall, leave something, which shall remain, a tissue or a tangle of those rays of beauty and of truth I have been able to draw out, unbroken, as I was unravelling away the web of my existence. I would leave something that would either stand for ever, like an ancient walnut dropping a perennial shower of nuts to be cracked by generation after generation, and only

Posthumous Indifference

bearing the more for having its lower branches beaten by the staves of successive critics ; or, at least, like an old apple-tree, which, after the original stump is worn out and forgotten, leaves a fruitful family of grafts in many orchards."

"That sounds all very fine and plausible in theory," replied Harry, "but it is not true in practice ; for nobody, while he is working in this world, thinks of himself in the result otherwise than as a living man, which is natural enough, having no experience of what being dead feels like. A man likes to leave a good name after he is dead, because he has found it a pleasant thing while he was alive. How would you like, to put the case the other way, to have some indelible infamy attached to your name for ever ?"

"If it was undeserved," said I, "and it came on after death, I should find it no more inconvenient than rottenness—but I should of course be sorry for my relations and descendants, to whom it *would* be an inconvenience to have an unpleasant, unburiable moral corpse of an unjustly supposed immoral ancestor always lying at their door, and offending the metaphorical nostrils of their friends."

In this discourse we arrived before the door of a *venta* by the banks of the Guadiaro, and as we were hungry, and our ponies had come a long way we dismounted. There was a family of gipsies on the tramp, sitting and lying about in picturesque groups, basking in the sun. Two handsome olive-complexioned boys started up and began to help us to unsaddle. They all, from the wrinkled and bleached old grandmother to the baby in arms, had something sinister and ominous in their swarthy faces, which gave us an impression that, in spite of their fair words and courteous smiles, they were cursing us by their devils even when we presented them with the remains of our loaf.

San Roque

We rode away with all the maledictions on our heads, troubling our heads as little as their own vermin did theirs. We crossed the Guadiaro, which was broad and rapid, and came up to our girths. Passing the *venta del Guadiaro*, we came to some hills, from the brows of which we looked back on the lofty, ragged mountains which we had slept among last night, and saw their blue peaks all purpled with the carmine sunset. The darkness came upon us in the hollows and dingles of the great cork wood.

Afterwards we emerged upon a *dehesa*, which seemed endless, and the road was hard to keep by the light of the evening star, which, however, shone very broad and clear, as if she meant to do all she could for us. Once I took a ridge of rocks for San Roque; but it appeared as if we should never get to the end of our day's work. We heard the eight-o'clock gun boom over the bay of Gibraltar, and echo from the cliffs of Algeciras, and we hailed with enthusiasm the voice of the British lion. Still on and on, over hill and valley, and knoll and dell, till at last the lights of a real and final San Roque twinkled in the distance.

I was quite knocked up, and on reaching Macrea's Hotel, was unable to do justice to the mutton chops and Bass's pale ale, on which we supped. I had just strength remaining to go round the room and rejoice with patriotic eye over the truly British prints with which the walls were hung, principally sporting pieces and illustrations of Harrison Ainsworth's romances. The mahogany sideboard, too, was ranged with many decanters and cruet-stands, and mustard-pots, and forks, and spoons,—things unknown to the hostels of Spain, where you have your plate and pipkin set before you, and pull your own *navaja* (clasp-knife) out of your sash to despatch the comestibles. Sometimes by earnest entreaty one may get a wooden spoon among a large party;

Gibraltar

and with the wine-jug they never think of giving two persons more than a glass—but then, of course, the other may drink out of the jug.

I ate a mouthful, and immediately fell asleep, with a long cigar in my mouth. Harry, however, considerably routed me up, and got me off to bed. He said next morning that he did not believe I ever woke up at all, for I held my candle at right-angles and talked incoherently in Spanish to the English waiter, who seemed much shocked.

This morning I rose quite rested, and on my feet again. Gibraltar was now within a league and a half of us, and looked much more striking than any view I had seen of it, going round by sea on the other side.

Crossing a great number of drawbridges over broad fosses, between successive rims of battery, we pass at length beneath the shoulder of the great rock. The market was crowded with all nations : Turks and Jews, and Moors and Greeks, in turbans and jillabiahs and fezzes, chattering an immense variety of languages. The long street was full of familiar English faces, and the shop-windows surmounted with familiar English names. People stared at us a little as we rode in, and we heard a gentleman with a white tie and spectacles say to a young gentleman in a very long waist-coat, with a very large gold cable-chain (evidently his travelling pupil), “Look there!—here is doubtless a pair of those picturesque Ronda smugglers Mr. Ford speaks of.”—“All serene!” replied the young gentleman, without any tokens of tempestuous interest.

The waiters of the Clubhouse Hotel seemed quite aghast at such an abnormous pair of Englishmen, but we faced them with calm indifference, as if we were quite convinced that all travellers arriving from Spain came in a similar disguise. But it appeared, from the curiosity we excited, that there

Foreign Climbs

was something singular about our get-up or get-down, for a crowd gathered together to see us alight at the door.

The first thing was to rush to the post-office ; the second, to fortify our disappointments with a light lunch of bread and (double Gloucester) cheese and beer ; and after writing an hour or so, we sallied forth, when, with that aspiring energy which characterises the youth of Britain, we scaled the rock by its most rugged and steep ascent, which, scorning the idea of a guide, we of course hit upon with our usual felicity. After toiling up an interminable and dilapidated flight of steps, on the edge of a wall, we reached the signal-station hot and breathless, giving vent to many palpitating maledictions on the oppressive sultriness of foreign *climbs*.

Here the fresh breeze blowing over the razor-edge of the rock's backbone, freshened us up, and we looked over the dizzy precipice, which goes down like a wall on the other side to the rippling blue of the Mediterranean, 1,300 feet beneath. "The stately ships sailed in and out of their haven under the hill," and in the excitement of the scene, with two seas and two continents within our horizon, the wandering spirit of the buccaneer of old came strong upon us, and we spake of selling our ponies and buying a shallop, of which Harry (late midshipman, R.N.) was to be captain, and I crew. In this we were to sail by Scylla and Charybdis to Carthage, and crossing northward, glide among the Ionian islands ; then, coasting along the winding bays of Asia Minor, touch at Tyre and Sidon, put in at Joppa, and visit Jerusalem.

We descended to be in time for dinner ; and learning that it would be dished at gun-fire, went out and waited upon the line-wall to see the ceremony. The following sonnet, in the mild tourist style, will save description.

The Evening Gun

THE EVENING GUN.

Behind the cloudy cope of Algezir,
The sun upon the western heaven has spread
The glowing curtains of his golden bed—
Night's ebon steeds advancing in his rear,
With shadowy wings pursuing swift, draw near;
While dark'ning vapours, from their nostrils sped,
Athwart the ridge come sailing overhead,
Where Calpe frowns deep-bastion'd tier o'er tier.

Lo! from her brow a gush of bursting flame,
Whose hot sulphureous breath in silence roll'd,
Mixes among the fleeting vapours cold;—
Hark! the slow thunder breaks with dread acclaim;
And the hush'd ocean trembles, being told
The proud supremacy of Albion's name.

At dinner all the people were talking about the new ministry, which had come in while we had been wandering among the mountains, thinking of nobody in the world less than Lord John and Lord Derby.

March 7.

Now, that I have got news from home, I have agreed to go over the Straits to Africa, which, by the way, though Harry had been daily talking of it, we could not safely have done yet, for there has been a most tremendous storm raging almost ever since we arrived. A great man-of-war has run aground in the harbour, and all the shores are strewed with wrecks.

Since writing the above we have been down to the "water-gate," and arranged to go over to-morrow morning if the wind abate, which there is some hope of, as the evening is rather finer. The captain says his vessel will be laden with corn and Jews—a curious cargo. We have

A Funny Old Turk

done and seen nothing worth mentioning here in the last three or four days, because of the foul weather. We have sat at our window sketching the strange figures of Jews and Pagans standing on the line-wall, apparently anxious for the arrival of expected crafts, perhaps sunk in the tempest. They are usually very restless and difficult to draw. There is one funny old Turk in particular, who amuses us the most—a crooked old figure in a large white turban and blue *boornos*,¹ who goes flapping about in his wet yellow slippers, peeping anxiously through a large pair of spectacles under a huge green umbrella.

¹ Hooded cloak.

CHAPTER XVI

AFRICA, *March 9.*

I THINK my reader will allow that there is a solemn grandeur of simplicity in this date—an assumption of continental completeness ; as if, by the first step on shore, one had put one's foot into the whole boot of Africa. You would have laughed if you could have seen us land. A quantity of yelling savages, above their knees in the surf, hardly waited for the keel to cleave the sand, before they plunged upon us, like schoolboys over a handful of nuts, and carried us off, after a severe scramble. The three or four, who set me down on the sand, immediately became vociferous for *bakshish*. To keep them a little at bay till I could get out a small bit of silver, it occurred to me to twirl rapidly round, clearing a circle in the press with the heavy swing of my cloak held by the collar.

But I have begun in the middle, and ought first to have told you how we got across the Straits. The wind had gradually fallen in the night, and at breakfast a message came from the captain that he was only waiting for us. The *felucca* which we were to sail in seemed very deep laden. Arriving aboard, the captain asked us if we had our bills of health, which we had not.

“Then you will have to go back,” said he, “otherwise you will not be able to go ashore at Tangier.” He sent his mate back with us.

The Moorish Corn Merchant

The old Moorish merchant, who was in a tremendous stickle to get his wheat to the market at Tangier, and who had probably been already using disrespectful language towards our great-grandmothers for their somewhat remote instrumentality in keeping the vessel waiting—now finding that something was forgotten, and that still further delay was about to take place—grew pale with fury, and began to scream and gesticulate in the most frantic manner, wringing his hands and tearing his turban; so that he had to be held by the sailors, to prevent him from doing something desperate.

The stout old Cerberus guarding the portals of the Bill of Health Office, on the quay, told us in Spanish to wait. With a great burst of indignant breath, I cried “*Porqué?*” (why?)

“*Porqué?*; because his worship the commissioner is engaged.”

“Engaged! What is that to us? Let him engage himself without delay in making out our bill of health. Engaged, forsooth! when very principal *caballeros* have their vessel waiting, with a fair wind for Africa!”

All this bluster did not move him in the least; but the mate bethought himself of a remark which we should never have hit on.

“These are English gentlemen,” said he; and this simple truism had the most electrical effect on the old Gibraltese porter, who, by our dresses, had taken us for Spaniards. Up he jumped, with, “Beg pardon, gentlemen,” and showed us in—where the old clerk, who must have heard all that passed at the door, looked rather ashamed of himself,—and we had what we came for in a jiffy. He made a job of us, nevertheless, drawing us out two separate bills where one would have done for a whole ship’s company, as ours, in

The Pillars of Hercules

fact, *did*. This accounted to us for the seemingly inexplicable patience with which the captain waited for us, though we had made a bargain to go very cheap. He had no other bill of health on board, and without us could not have landed. On our re-arrival aboard, as all our small change had been expended on the bills of health, the old Moor, in his anxiety, gave us money to pay the boatmen, and the *felucca* was under sail in less than two minutes, tumbling heavily along over the rolling seas which the late storms had left behind. From the angle of Algeciras we steered towards the Gibel Moosa (Mountain of Moses), the other Pillar of Hercules, and a much larger one than Calpe, being nearly 6,000 precipitous feet above the beach,—a fine rugged pile of dark rock, frowning like an Æthiopian giant, a vast continent's worthy sentinel, with a fillet of white cloud circling his swarthy brow.

On board, beside the corn-merchant, there were two other Moors, younger men, whom we took to be his sons, and about thirty Jews of all ages. They seemed to be in a state of exuberant hilarity on their approaching return to their native country. They were now crowding round the purser of the vessel, a Hebrew also, who had in his hand a roll, written in the cursive Hebrew character, seeming to be a list of names, with sums in dollars and *reals* opposite each. Set on the closed hatchway, which served as his *comptoir*, was an open money-bag, from which he was disbursing small sums to a group with greedy eyes, and hooked, avaricious fingers outstretched for their share. So eager and clamorous were his customers, that one of the sailors had to be stationed near with a rope's-end to keep them a little in order.

It appeared, on inquiry, that they were a party of beggars, brought over on speculation by the purser, to

Judas, the Purse-Holder

exercise their calling on the British sympathies and pockets of Gibraltar. He had kept their purse, and was now distributing the proceeds of their respective earnings, after deducting their passage and keep on the Rock, with, no doubt, a moderate per-centage to remunerate himself for the risk and trouble of the undertaking. The man's hypocritical smooth oily face, with twinkling sharp grey eyes, under a sloping, wicked cast of brow, would have made a good study for a Judas ; whom I imagine always as a smiling, plausible rogue, not the scowling, perspicuous traitor he is usually painted.

Among the others, too, there was a great number of picturesque heads, with a variety of beards ; but the nobly-cut features were generally disfigured by a mean, servile expression. Our sketch-books were brought out of the faithful *alforjas*, which still accompanied us ; but the Israelites seemed to entertain a strong objection to having their likeness, which they considered as part of themselves, taken from them. The victim usually covered up his head in the cowl of his *jillabiah* (a sort of grey striped coarse woollen shirt, with a peak and tasselled hood), and it was only from stolen glances, when his curiosity to see what was going on overcame his horror of being drawn, that we could gather a few faint resemblances. These, however, were immediately recognised as exact portraits by the bystanders, who, as long as they were not pitched upon themselves, were much amused and delighted.

The sketch-books were soon shut up by a sharp shower, and all the company huddled together under bits of tarpaulin and bits of board, which four or five would prop on the tops of their heads. The Moor and his family crept into some empty wooden boxes, in which they had probably brought merchandise to Gibraltar. We in the

I am called “ The Christian ”

stern were tolerably protected by the three-cornered mizzen-sail. A little Hebrew boy, who crept for shelter nearer to me than the purser's ideas of etiquette approved, was commanded to “quitarse d'arriba del Cristiano” (to remove himself from above the Christian), which rather struck my fancy, it having never occurred to me before to be so specially designated by my father.

When the shower was over, and the accounts of the mendicity scheme settled, I asked Judas Iscariot to let me look at the list, and to explain the alphabet to me. I wrote out a few of the first lines of Genesis, and got him to write it in the cursive character. The two young Moors, seeing a writing-lesson going on, came to look ; so I suddenly changed my pencil, and ran off into a verse of the Koran ; whereupon the infidels began to exclaim, and we at once fraternised on the strength of a mutual, though probably on both sides a very slight, acquaintance with the writings of Mahomet.

We entered into a sort of heterogeneous conversation, mingling for its elements the little they knew of Spanish with the little I knew of Arabic. One of them, who proved to be a barber, had a talent for drawing, and illustrated his discourse on the beauty and magnificence of Tangier with a sketch of the mosque tower. He drew quite in the mediæval style, with broad black lines. At the top of his tower was a turbaned Muezzin with a speaking-trumpet, which if he had dropped it perpendicularly from the mouthpiece would have touched the ground. Still higher was a tremendous square stiff flag, with a crescent in the middle, drawn with a gigantic minuteness of attention to the rings, and pulleys, and cords which were to hoist it on the staff. Beside it, in the same style, he drew a fort, with bomb-shells flying in all directions.

Samson

On approaching Tangier the hilarity of the Jews, which had been damped by the shower, revived in such force, that the functionary of the rope's-end thought it necessary to admonish them playfully over their heads and shoulders. They all received his chastisements with a cringing humility except one, whom the Christian bully evidently held in respect.

This was a young man, the most uproarious of the party ; but his figure was a model for a young Samson in all the pride of his strength,—such a brawny breadth of back and shoulders, depth of chest, and massive mould of limbs ! The consciousness of superior power gave him both dignity and impudence. The sailor, who was bullying the rest, seemed ashamed to spare the worst offender altogether, and occasionally gave him a mild flick ; whereupon he would lay hold of him, and turn him about like a child, and laugh, showing a wide mouthful of teeth set in all directions, like *chevaux-de-frise*. His whole countenance was equally hideous ; but there was a broad bestial good-humour and boldness, and wealth of animal spirits in the expression, which invested the man, taken all together, with a kind of ugly beauty and coarse nobility. He had offered to carry us ashore. He set his services at a *peseta*, about elevenpence, which we rejected with scorn. He immediately went off in an extempore Gitanesque style of song, in the indifferent Spanish which is the habitual language of the Tangier Jews :—

SAMSON'S SONG.

As our vessel swept the billows,
Sailing into Tangier bay,
To the haughty, rich Inglese,
Thus I spoke, and this did say :—

Mohammed

“See the surf is white and frothy,
Lashed upon the yellow sand—
I am poor, and wear no small-clothes,
I will bear my lord to land.”

“If you bear me through the water,
What’s your price—the smallest sum?”
For Inglese loves to bargain,
And the gold sticks to his thumb.

“I demand but one *peseta*,
One *peseta* and no more.”
“Dog!” he cried, “thou shalt not cheat me,
Sooner will I wade ashore.”

This impromptu, delivered in a rough sonorous voice, with much spirit and humour, in a lively *trochaic* (that is to say, trundling) metre, was received with laughter and applause.

The town of Tangier stands on a slope within the western horn of the bay. On the horn is a ruinous old fortress, up to which the town rises in a flight of flat-topped houses, with here and there a few towers and minarets; it is in fact like an ordinary picture of an Eastern city.

When we emerged from the skirmish on the beach, we were still followed by a stately old Moor, with a clean white turban, who seemed in a tranquil manner to have made up his mind that we were now become part of his private property. He talked a peculiar Spanish.

“Señora Inglesa tengo fonda aqui riba.” (An English lady has an hotel up here.)

“Oh, that’s it,” said Harry. “He belongs to Miss Duncan’s hotel, that’s all right.”

“Yez, gen-men, me Mohammed, all right, belongy to Miss Duncan Hotel. Tought gen-men was Spanis; me talk Inglis same as Spanis. Zat mosky! muslemán

and Moses

jurje," said he, as we passed the arched doorway of the mosque, and saw turbaned figures kneeling here and there within.

We followed him up the main street to the market-place, the inhabitants staring at us out of their pigeon-hole shops. At last, through narrow, dirty, winding streets, we reached the hotel, and slammed the door in the face of a train of infidel ragamuffins, who were following us for *bakshish*. The house, a curious old Moorish dwelling, is fitted up with English comfort and furniture. At dinner, we were waited on by the majestic Mahomet and a meek Jew, Moses, whose shambling gait and down-cast look formed a contrast to the imperial port and solemn strut of the picturesque old Moor. Moses, however, was practically far the more serviceable man of the two.

Our venerable and attentive hostess paid us a visit, and told us about many remarkable persons, who have been here during the nine-and-twenty years she has lived in Tangier, with many things which they did and said; but the only vivid picture which this chronicle has left on my memory is of the amiable and condescending manner in which the Marquis of G—— dried a pair of silk socks over the charcoal brazier in the kitchen; an historical fact, which occurred about nine years ago.

The moon is glancing in through the open window from the spangled ripples of the bay, but I am too sleepy to be poetical.

This morning, before breakfast, I stopped before one of the little shop-nooks in the main street, where a grim and bearded Pagan sat cross-legged, and began to bargain with him for a pair of bright-yellow morocco-leather slippers. While the treaty was proceeding, a sleek and officious Jew came up, under pretence of interpreting, and insinuated that

Slippery Dealing

he had better and cheaper slippers at his shop. I thought, perhaps, he was no greater rogue than others, and so I went with him, and found a very smart establishment upstairs, with a great variety of shawls and scarfs, and jillabiahs, and Moorish cushions, and daggers, and every sort of curiosity ; the only thing which appeared to be deficient were yellow slippers. In the court of the house there was a plasterer or whitewasher. While I was looking over the things, he had slipped out, and when I came into the street, he fell upon me with strong entreaties to inspect *his* shop somewhere else, but I told him he was a whited sepulchre, and went back to breakfast.

Wandering about the town, we came to the foot of the castle hill. At the top there was a gateless and dilapidated arch, amenable to pacific entry ; and within, a picturesque, irregular court-yard, partially in ruins, with horse-shoe arches, and slender arabesque columns. Sauntering in through the archway, we had been passed by a handsome maiden, bearing a basket, whom we knew, by being unveiled, to be a Jewess. At a modest distance we followed the fair Susannah among the winding angles and corners of the ruin. She went in at a low broad arch. Here we were received by a grizzly-bearded old man in a turban, with a couple of large keys in his belt. Him we saluted with "*essalâm aleykom*" and a bow.

"*Waleykom essalâm,*" he replied. "Ye, oh caballeros, are apparently Spanish," he continued, in slow strangely-accented Castilian, "and are doubtless come to see the prison."

"We are come to see the prison, truly, but we are not Spanish, being, *shokr Allâh*,[†] of the family of the Inkleez."

"Thrice welcome, sons of the Inkleez ; I am the father

[†] Thanks be to God !

The Children of Captivity

of the prison," said he, making a *salaam*; "and ye shall see the children of captivity." He then poured out some coffee from a pipkin which stood over a few charcoal embers. He made many excuses for only having one cup in his coffee-service, and lit a long chibouque, from which we each smoked a few whiffs after we had taken a sip or two of the coffee.

"But who is that fair maiden whispering through the hole in the door?"

"She is Rahab, the daughter of one Joshua, an old rogue, who lately sold a donkey to one of the faithful for more *dirhems*¹ than it was worth, even had it not been bewitched; but bewitched it was, and within a week was visited by the annuler of possessions and the reliever of burdens; therefore the old dog will remain in my family till the price be refunded. His daughter often brings him food in her basket. The ill-omened old man fares well, with redundancy; and were he starved a little, it might hasten the disgorgement of his dishonest gains; but heretofore, when I told her she must come no more, she cried so bitterly, saying the old man would die, that I found it not in my heart to refuse her; for the she-wolf of an unbelieving Jewess has fair eyes, and it pinches my heart to see her weep. Daughter of the accursed, stand aside, and let these princes of the Franks look through the door."

A most foul, black, damp and dismal place it was; the crowded prisoners squatting about here and there on the floor, which was like the pavement of a stable, on an old-fashioned farm where ammonia is not economised. The ancient Joshua was standing near the door, his long white beard wagging as he chewed.

While we were looking, there was a noise at the outer

¹ Pieces of silver money.

Staves of Doctrine

gate, and a fresh offender was brought in. He was an old acquaintance, having only been let out of prison a week ago, and now he had been caught again, stealing a bunch of carrots in the market-place. He was very vociferous in his defence, but in the most brilliant crisis of his harangue, as soon as he had been shouldered opposite the prison-door, it opened with a crash of bolts and chains—they gave him a slap on the back, and in he leapt, head foremost, over the high stone threshold ; the door crashed to again, and there was an end of him. There was something irresistibly ludicrous in the extremely sudden disposal of this turbulent purloiner of vegetables, of which a description, necessarily telling a number of simultaneous occurrences one after another, can give but little idea.

We presented the prisoners with a small contribution for bread, which they clamorously demanded, and gave the father of the prison a large cigar. Going out of the castle, we sat down on a stone bench along the wall, beneath the shade of a tower. Here a small crowd of infidels gathered to see us light our pipes with a burning glass, after which they wished to have their fingers burned ; and we fell into a religious discussion, carried on at first by short staves from the Koran, of which, having exhausted our stock ineffectually, we finished off the argument with our long broomsticks ; these we applied to their shins ; for they could not keep their tempers when we quoted Mahomet to prove that both Christians and Jews might be saved, if they believed in God and the last day, and did virtuously.

As we descended through the town, we were seized upon by Israelites and carried into many shops, where they tempted us ; but we would not buy anything, none of them being equal to the upstairs establishment, which I had seen before breakfast. Thither we went and instituted

Oriental Attire

a general rummage. Jillabiahs, haiks, boornooses, fez-caps, cushions, &c. Harry told me that a *haik* was considered a most desirable thing by young ladies, as a dress to go away from evening parties in.

I always wonder, for my part, why fair creatures are so particular about a costume to go home in their dark carriages; but perhaps it is for the sake of the last impression they leave on the carpeted door-step, to haunt the dreams of some shivering adorer, who stands in the night air till John has slumped the tight door into the panel, the sleepy horses plunge heavily forward, and Lady Something Else's carriage stops the way.

While I was wavering whether to lay out on one of these Moorish veils, which are of a curious white woollen texture, striped or shot, or something of that sort, with silk, the cunning old Jew sent for his daughter.

She came up very slovenly attired, but they hung the *haik* upon her, and she looked so pretty in it that I purchased one without more ado. It, indeed, effected in her a great metamorphosis, covering up all the slovenly attire in soft white drapery, and showing only a most fascinating pair of Jewess's eyes (worth more than Jews' eyes), some stray tresses of deepest jet, and part of a forehead like rose-tinted alabaster.

Afterwards we looked in at the place where they smoke *keef*; a dirty, sloppy court-yard, little better than the prison. The smokers were squatting about inhaling the fumes of the very small pipes, and rolling up their eyes as if it was very delightful. In the corner a man sat whittling pipe-stems in curious arabesque patterns. The demand apparently exceeded the supply, for he had only one on hand, which was also in hand, and on my offering to buy it, he said he must finish it; I said I had rather not wait,

Keef-Smoking

for I could finish the other end, copying the pattern of the one already done. We bought *keef*, which appears to be a small leaf, growing along a certain kind of hemp-stalk, and retired to our housetop to make the experiment.

Our imaginations were filled with a forecast of the brilliant dreams about to draw their magic-lantern shadows across the white sheet of the lulled mind. I knew well enough whither away *my* spirit would flee, to be at rest, and my heart beat loudly as I lit the little pipeful of what seemed very like sawdust. But though I drew breath after breath, down to the very bottom of my lungs, and vigorously prepared to be much affected, I could not perceive that it produced any effect whatever, nor could Harry. He disliked the peculiar flavour of the herb, which I found rather agreeable than otherwise. After smoking three or four pipes, the experiment was given up as a failure.

In the meantime a (no doubt) lovely creature, entirely enveloped in her *haik*, was walking about on the adjoining roof. She seemed inclined to pay us, at least, the compliment of curiosity, and stared us so much out of countenance through her eye-holes, that we were forced to go to the other side of the roof. Here we saw a cat take a run and a flying-leap over the narrow street, and we could not help observing that the gay Lotharios of the East no doubt watch circumspectly how the cat jumps. The houses, which are very inaccessible every way but from the top, stand so close together, that a good leaper might easily travel from one end of the town to the other on their roofs. They are all detached from one another, at a distance which is no doubt deemed safe by lethargic old Orientals, bundled in long robes, against all eaves-droppers. Besides, *lepers* are turned out of Eastern cities.

Summoned downstairs by the Jews coming with what we

African Hospitalities

had bought in the morning, they nearly cleared us out of all our little means; for in Gibraltar we could not raise any money, because Harry had left all his Coutts's circular-notes packed up in his portmanto at Seville; and as there appears to be no vessel going back to Europe, it is more than probable that our excellent landladies, the Misses Duncan, will have to distraign upon our bodies, and sell us to the Algerines to indemnify themselves for our sustenance.

While I sat carving the pipe-stem, our early dinner was ready, after which we wandered forth with Mohammed. The corn-merchant of the *felucca* met us, shook hands with great cordiality, and insisted on taking us to a coffee-house to be treated, up a narrow flight of dark stairs into a narrow court-yard covered with matting. Here were assembled a group of chattering Moors all standing, for there was no place in the floor clean enough to sit down upon.

Coming down from the *café*, we were met by another of our fellow passengers, the young Moor who had drawn the mosque-towers and fort in Harry's book. He also shook hands most affectionately, and carried us over the way to his shop, for it turned out he was a barber, and not a son of the old corn-merchant. His shop was surrounded by a sort of divan, covered with matting, on which we sat cross-legged and smoked and drank more coffee, and talked as well as we could in Alcoranic Arabic, which is very different from Berber.

A lame man came in and sat down. He addressed us in broken English. He was from Mogador, and had been in London with Batty's company as a Bedouin. He had been in other parts of "London," viz., "Littlepol and My Sister (Liverpool and Manchester), had married wife in England" ("not lowsy woman"); he had had an accident which caused his leg to be very "sick" ever since—had come

Lovely Women

back to go home to Mogador, but had here set up as a gunsmith—he had a gun which he could sell us (“not lowsy gun”) at a moderate price.

The dark had crept upon us unperceived. A pious *faquir* came by, and stopping on the threshold, swang about a censer scattering incense, and vociferating prayers. This itinerant mass-performer was rewarded with a copper coin, and departed. Then came a man with a young cock. The barber jumped up and cut off its head with a razor in a most expeditious manner, and the fowl-bearer departed. I asked if people did not kill their own chickens in this country, and was informed that many persons had an objection to shedding blood, and were in the habit of sending to him. Doubtless he must have shed a considerable amount of the blood of the faithful, if he shaves their heads with the same razor which decapitates poultry.

Mohammed now informed us that he had heard there was a Jewish wedding to-night, whither he would conduct us if we pleased. As the Hebrews hold open house on these occasions to all creeds and nations, we followed him through the dark winding streets, till we came to an open portal, where flaring torches gleamed on a swarm of people going in and out.

The supper was just concluding; the tables were removed, and we were seated in the banqueting-room in the highest place, that is to say, nearest the right-hand corner of the nuptial bed, which filled the whole end of the room. What do you think there was on the bed?—why, about six-and-thirty Jewesses, the loveliest collection of women huddled in the smallest space I ever saw—positively all beautiful; and if my heart had not been otherwise engaged, I should not have minded marrying the whole bevy at once—foolish, indeed!—nevertheless, an idea worthy of Solomon. The

A Hebrew Wedding

young ladies, it appears, were only invited to *adorn* the banquet with their presence, and sat up there to be looked at while their male relatives ate. In the furthest corner, as much out of sight as possible, and veiled, sat the bride. Poor thing! she must have been very nearly smothered under that cloth, for we could hardly breathe, and the heat and crush were tremendous even to us, who sat on a bench, unveiled, and unsurrounded by a compact huddle of three dozen fair friends on one four-poster.

But now there was a stir, and the chief rabbi was conducted to the head of the bench opposite us. In his hand he bore a fiddle, on which he began to play across his knee, as if it had been a bass; but it was a small violin, and he was a large man with a long white beard and a pair of silver spectacles over a very large hooked nose. When he began to play, the guests began to howl an accompaniment with great uncton. Shortly a ring was formed, and a blooming Herodias was picked from that hot-bed of lilies and carnations to dance before the company. The dance seemed to be more of gesture than steps; she swayed about her body, and waved about her arms, but the steps seemed hardly more than occasionally beating time with her feet. The company beat time with their hands, and howled still more than before, so as nearly to drown the screeches of the *rabbi's* fiddle.

When the dance was done, the bride was brought in unveiled: she had been smuggled out behind the bed, and attired in the first of a series of suits, which she subsequently showed off in succession. She was a beautiful creature, with that brilliant pearly complexion, those lustrous eyes and glossy raven tresses which only Tangerine Jewesses possess in such perfection. The bridegroom, I am grieved to say, was a sorryish-looking individual, who seemed in

A Commotion

no wise to appreciate the happiness he was about to undergo: he appeared nervous and melancholy; and, to make the matter worse, they set him down in a chair in the middle of the room, and shaved him before the audience. After this there was a contribution,—whether to pay the barber or the supper, or to increase the dower of the bride, we could not clearly ascertain; but we paid up our bachelor's mite and departed, much gratified, and nearly baked.

This morning, as we were sitting on the brow of the castle hill, there appeared to be a commotion of some sort in a broad open space near one of the gates of the city below. Going down to see what it was, we were soon met by a crowd coming up the narrow street. They were headed by musicians with *tamtams* (a sort of kettle-drums), and trumpets, and fifes. A Moor, with a white beard, led a calf. Next came a turbaned figure, enveloped in much drapery, riding on a black horse with two huge panniers, out of which appeared the mild, resigned faces of two venerable old rams. A few men, with very long firelock-muskets, followed,—the rest were tagrag-and-bobtail. Under the last denomination we enlisted ourselves, and returned with the crowd to the castle hill, from which we commanded the house of the bride,—for it was a marriage procession—at least, one of the preparatory measures.

The band played a strange discordant combination of noises, interrupted at irregular intervals by the explosion of firelocks. The firing of these unwieldy engines was curious. The musketeer about to discharge, balances himself gingerly on his left heel, points the muzzle at the ground, and applies the smoking end of his long saltpetred cord—fizz! flash! bang!—and round he spins, twirled on his heel by the recoil of his long rusty piece. We could see inside the open door a good many veiled Moriscas. What

Moorish Nuptials

came of the calf and rams we did not see ; they probably were wedding gifts, not sacrifices, and destined to figure in the capacity of veal and mutton at some subsequent ceremony.

Waiting for the *muezzin's* call to prayer, with many of the faithful around us in the market-place, a shoemaker over the way invited us all to his stall to drink verbena tea, which, he assured us, along with a pipe of *keef*, would have the same effect upon us as brandy. The *yerba buena* (Arabicè, *luisa*) makes a pleasant infusion, but does not possess any intoxicating qualities ; at least, we departed as sober as we came.

To-day I have gone about in the Moorish costume, but have not been less stared at from dressing like any other Pagan,—a crimson skull-cap with a blue silk tassel ; a loose blue and white striped shirt-like robe of woollen ; with a long cowl, either drooping behind the shoulders, or pulled up over the head. I call the cowl long, because it goes back in a long peak like the tail of a fishing-net, and has a tassel at the end. A pair of bare ankles and yellow slippers complete the costume as far as visible to the world at large.

It is night. We have just come in from a most awful scene. Rolling clouds of smoke, lit by the red flash, and rent and shaken by the explosion of musketry ; parties of Arabs charging about here and there beneath the sulphurous canopy, shouting as well as shooting. What do you think it was ? An insurrection ? No—a wedding ! The red heifer and the rams had only been preparatory, and to-night the bride was to be conducted to the house of the bridegroom. These skirmishers were merely making ready an atmosphere with the smoke of their *feux de joie* for the procession to pass through.

At last it appeared. Around the *howdah* (a sort of sedan-chair, in which the bride is carried) the Arab soldiers

Taking Home the Bride

redoubled their activity, charging—one party upon another—and discharging their long guns into the air. Flaring torches flung a flickering and uncertain light over the tumultuous but rather formidable chaos through which the timid Moorish maiden goes from the nursery to housekeeping. We could not help thinking that in happy England some of our hardened and experienced spinsters, who have braved the link-boys and “carriage-stops-the-way-coming-out” struggles of three or four seasons, would hardly go through such a trial in the cause of matrimony: but perhaps we are wrong!

CHAPTER XVII

GIBRALTAR, *March 14.*

WE were almost in despair of ever getting away from Tangier, when one morning a great steamer ran into the bay. It proved to be a French war-steamer, bringing a consul-general; for the republic has made up some little difference with the empire of Morocco which caused the consul to retire some time ago. This steamer was going back to Gibraltar next morning, so we lost no time in calling to pay our respects to the newly-arrived functionary. We were shown up into a Parisian-looking drawing-room, and a *beau monsieur*, of about thirty-five, dressed in a smart official uniform, arose to receive us. His good manners could hardly prevent a look of surprise from mingling with that appropriate listening face with which he bowed and stood waiting for us to explain our errand. We felt that in our soiled but still flaring muleteer's dress we did not look like the proper sort of individuals to ask for a free passage on board a man-of-war of a foreign power. I waited for Harry to say something, but he said nothing; and so, after a slight pause, I began to state our case:—

“Sans trop en avoir l'air, M. le Consul, nous sommes des gentilshommes Anglais,—we are dressed as contrabandiers, because we have been travelling among the mountains of Spain, and have no other clothes, otherwise we would not

A Diplomatic Overture

have ventured to present ourselves attired so little *à la mode*."

"Mais, messieurs, n'en parlez pas, je vous en prie. Cela se voit fort bien, et du reste, c'est une mise assez commode pour voyager. Moi aussi, j'ai voyagé en Espagne. Is there anything I can do for you?"

"We are *au désespoir* for a vessel to take us back to Europe; and we understand that the steamer which brought your excellency is going back to Gibraltar; we are ashamed to derange you on your arrival, but we have no alternative."

"With the greatest pleasure, gentlemen: ce sont des petites complaisances que les nations se font mutuellement."

With which, having been thus made an international affair, we were handed two small state-papers, requesting the captain to receive us aboard; and we took leave of our polite benefactor with many thanks.

That evening, taking a turn through the city for a farewell look, some camels, with wilder-looking Arabs than common, came in at the western gate from the distant deserts of the interior. We felt, on seeing them, more identified with the real inhabitants of Africa than we had been by our intercourse with the tame barbarians of Tangier, so much handled by Europeans as to be comparatively harmless, like Zoological Garden lions. Two Ethiopians, in the same quarter of the city, which seems devoted to strangers from the interior, sat cross-legged on the ground, rocking themselves, and nodding their heads, and rolling up the yellow whites of their idiotic eyes; their thick lips were dropped, and their dark brown oily features (without the slightest vestige of consciousness) shining in the sunset. We asked what was the matter with them, and found they had been chewing *hasheesh*.

Right of Self-Defence

But I must get away from Tangier. And yet I must tell you of a conversation we had with a worthy clergyman, who arrived the day before our departure, and with whom we partook of our last African tea. It was about carrying arms or not, travelling in Spain. He was strongly against the practice, for fear we might shoot some of the banditti. We said we were much more afraid of the banditti shooting us, and very much preferred being on equal terms with them.

“But,” said he, “you have no right to shoot a fellow-creature, merely to prevent yourself from being robbed; and if, as you say, you are called upon to go down on your face, and give up your money, you should do so much rather than shed blood.”

“No doubt,” I replied, “if they amiably took what you gave them, and your word for it that you had no more valuables, and did not proceed to strip you of your clothes, and take your horse; and if, after all, when dissatisfied with their gleanings, they had not an unkind habit of rubbing the traveller’s nose on a flinty road; nay, sometimes killing him outright—I agree that your argument would be good. But, as it is, with all these possibilities, added to the inconvenience of losing one’s money, costume, and horse, my impression is, that the most reasonable thing, when an evident and acknowledged bandit rushes out of the bushes and seizes your rein, is not to say, ‘Sir, I have money which I am ready to surrender, and pistols, with which I will fight if you intend to use me uncivilly;’ for then he would have time to throw his cloak over your head, and whip his knife into your bowels.”

“Then, sir, what is the most reasonable thing to do?”

“Why, to shoot him down at once, and do the same to the next man” (suiting the action to the word, and taking

Political Economy of Robbery

my revolver out of my belt, on which the ancient and reverend gentleman cried, "Oh! pray don't!" in a tone of some anxiety), "and the third man would probably run away."

"It is the squeamishness about shooting robbers that causes robbery to continue," said Harry. "A friend of mine lately killed two with a right and left rifle-shot in Mexico, and the road has been much safer since. The common view to take is, that the robber is to be considered more than the traveller."

"Yes!" said I. "Now the robber who selects this profession is (if he has studied Adam Smith) conscious that the little industry required, the rapid profits returned, and the exciting and romantic character of his trade, would draw so many persons into it, that there would soon be nobody left to rob, *unless*, observe me, unless there were certain drawbacks. One of those drawbacks, the bandit is well aware, consists in the liability to be shot in the ordinary course of his business."

"But," replied the reverend gentleman, "if you shoot him, you precipitate a human soul into eternity unprepared; and what an awful thought is that!"

"I am by no means sure that a prudent and pious thief, going on what he knew to be a perilous expedition (and if he was going to rob us, who carry an arsenal of pistols openly, he ought to pay us the compliment of thinking it a perilous expedition)—I am by no means sure, I say, that he would not get himself specially and provisionally shrived of his sins in case of accident; and, indeed, I think the scrupulous traveller has a right to suppose that such would be the case, and despatch him accordingly at so advantageous a conjuncture."

"By-the-bye," said he, "the robbers sometimes shoot

The “Narval”

themselves—perhaps because they feel it is part of their profession to be shot now and then, and find the scrupulous public object to performing their legitimate share in the transaction. I read in the Granada newspaper, a curious story of the suicide of a notorious robber the other day, near Seville. It appeared that he had been robbing a horse-dealer, but whether his desperation proceeded from remorse, which seemed improbable, or from a quarrel with his sweetheart, which is, perhaps, still more so, the writer had not been able to make out.”

“Perhaps he shot himself by accident,” said I; and the conversation turned.

Well, the pilot’s boat took us aboard the *Narval*, a formidable large black war-steamer. We were relieved of some slight uncertainty, as to how such strange figures would be received, by the lieutenant, who politely addressed us in very good English, and after making our acquaintance in about two minutes, introduced us to his brother officers.

We breakfasted with the *gamelle*,¹ and afterwards smoked and delivered a lecture on the English language, for several of the officers were learning it, but our lieutenant (Morin) had a surprisingly accurate and critical knowledge. The surgeon was musical, and had a book full of Spanish airs, which he had written after Rousseau’s method, which, he says, is coming very much into use. The reader will remember that Jean Jacques’ first effort was to publish a system of musical notation by numerical figures, instead of those mysterious dots and lines; but at the time the idea met with no attention. The surgeon played the guitar and sang.

Morin, from English literature, came to French. His

¹ Mess.

Paul Louis Courier

favourite author was Paul Louis Courier, a name we had neither of us heard. He produced the volume, read us some extracts, and seeing we very much appreciated them, gave it us.

Paul Louis Courier was a republican and bitter anti-Bonapartist, witty and whimsical, amiable, though rather caustic. He was always getting into quarrels with the mayor of his commune, who, according to Courier's very amusing account, disliked his politics, and encouraged everybody in bullying and cheating him. One might have thought, from the quaint and fanciful way in which he complains of his grievances, that they were next door to imaginary ones, if it did not appear in his life that he was finally assassinated by his enemies.

While our time thus passed tranquilly in the cabin, a storm was brewing outside. The wind was dead ahead, and grew stronger and stronger. The motion began to be unpleasant, and going on deck it was found to be raining fast. Shortly it rained faster, and then torrents; the pitching of the vessel, too, had become so unpleasant, that I could not stand the cabin atmosphere.

The whole mess each recommended me to take a several sovereign thing against nausea; but at last it was unanimously carried that, for an English stomach, tea was the sovereignest thing of all; so a cup was made and administered, and, I must say, tasted a good deal like physic.

We had established ourselves in as sheltered a corner as we could find on deck, wrapped in our cloaks, which shed the torrents very successfully. However, as the rain fell much faster than it could run off by the sluice-holes at the sides, there was soon a great flood. This, as the ship rolled, came rushing down upon us, and washing back again in a tidal wave about a foot deep. Of course our feet got rather

A Gale

wet. I never was in such a storm of rain in my life ; sky as black as ink ; great clouds sweeping over the dark sea before a very violent gusty wind ; now and then the tops of the African mountains looking down through a break in the mist. The moan of the gale through the vibrating shrouds, the splash of the paddles, and the plank-deafened metallic din of machinery straining against the tempest, made a sort of melancholy, unmusical accompaniment to our uncomfot, which was so complete, and on so grand a scale, as to gather a sort of consolation from its own sublimity.

You may imagine what sort of work it was, from the fact of our taking about nine hours to go thirty miles in a great steamer. However, there is an end to all things, and we got ashore before gunfire.

The next day was Sunday, and it rained and blew great guns. As we sat painting, Morin came in ; we asked him to dine, and he greatly enlivened our evening. I gave him my Sevillian *navaja* to cut the pages of his new *Courrier* when he got to Paris. Our conversation with Morin shifted from French to English, and from English to French, as often as the speaker came to a difficulty and relapsed into his own language to explain himself better.

To-day (Monday) is our last day, and now or never we must see the wonders of the Rock. We were waked early by Morin, who came to say his *adieux* and *mille choses*. He, of course, had to sleep on shore ; because the fortress is locked up at sunset, and nobody can go in or out on pain of death. Since breakfast I have been out buying a variety of things—tape, a packing-needle, a pair of spurs (English spurs are much sharper than Spanish, and we are preparing a pleasant little surprise for the flanks of our lazy ponies), half-a-pound of gunpowder, a pencil, &c. The diplomatic waiter has gone to get us permission to see the galleries.

Galleries of the Rock

Well, the diplomate of the hotel brought us our permit, and we climbed one of the steep staircase streets, and entered beneath the Arabesque arch of an old Moorish castle, which stands forth, picturesque and ruinous, above the smug, scientific masses of modern fortification. The court-yard within seemed full of guard-houses; here the British soldier smokes clay-pipes, and drinks beer, with an accompaniment of familiar British imprecations, where once the Moslem warriors, cased in Cordovan steel, drank their coffee and stroked their beards with pious *inshallâhs* and other solemn ejaculations.

An Irish artillery corporal took charge of us—a very civil engineer. He conducted us along zig-zag passages, among fortifications with cannons here and there, which have left only a vague impression on my mind, but I dare say there were ravelins, and curtains, and covered ways, and counter-scarps enough, if described accurately, to be quite impregnable to any civilian understanding. At length we came to a black arch, and plunged into the rock. Our corporal led us up dark, steep, dripping, sloppy caverns—the celebrated galleries of Gibraltar. Here and there, in the ascent, were deep-niched portholes, through which, at airy depth, burst in upon the darkness, what seemed by contrast bright views of sea and mountain, though the day was rainy and dark and windy. Of course, in each port-hole was a great gun. After getting very hot and steamy in the damp caverns, we emerged on a point where there was a mighty rushing wind, pleasant and cool, but so violent that it seemed likely to blow us off the precipice. Here we stood, keeping our feet as well as we could, on Calpe's brow to admire the view.

This northern extremity of the rock breaks away from Spain with an abrupt precipice of goodness knows how many hundred feet, as if solidly resolved to have nothing whatever

St. George's Hall

to do with the adjacent country, to which it is only attached by a low strip of tawny sand. On either side the leaden

"Waters chafe to meet,
But pause and crouch beneath her feet."

This quotation led us to discuss whether Gibraltar was to be considered the Corinth of the moderns, or Corinth the Gibraltar of the ancients; and then (as we entered St. George's Hall, a great frontal sinus in the forehead of the Rock), having been carried back upon history, we naturally proceeded to carry ourselves forward upon futurity. It was agreed, that as long as England lasted, Gibraltar would never yield; but that when Macaulay's "Australian native sat upon his broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's," some civilised barbarian of somewhere else might come to the deserted Rock.

He will wind his way, in some fear of wild beasts, up the galleries, and come to what some ancient record of the place (for we will suppose him an antiquarian savage) informs him "was called by that warlike nation, the Britons, the hall of St. George, their patron saint, a fabulous warrior-god. I dare say they sacrificed to him here, perhaps human victims, for they mingled many barbarous customs of remotest antiquity with their faint and inefficient notions of religion." Here he will stride across the cavern thoughtfully, as if to measure its size, and stumbling over the rusty old remains of a 32-pounder, awake from his reverie and continue, "Truly, they must have hacked and hewed with great perseverance to hollow out these halls and passages in the solid stone, and much energy and zeal were thrown away in the worship of that once powerful but now broken-down demon, War. In the days when the nations were so little aware of

We take up our Parabola

their interests as to send out great ships to batter one another to pieces with these deadly engines, whose name I forget," kicking the old cannon again, "a great master of those hellish arts, called Nelson, is said to have feasted in this cave—doubtless, after a sacrifice of human flesh. Yet this monster, at the time, was the idol of popularity among his people. It seems to me that soon after his era, and, by the way, the great Frank Napoleon's bloody career, that the nations began to conceive peace was an advantage, led by one Cobden, also celebrated for having introduced corn into his country, which formerly had only potatoes—both important vegetables, I fancy, before we discovered the system of feeding by electricity."

Our Irish gunner seemed much taken aback by these anticipations, and I have little doubt, in confidence, thought us slightly deranged. But to reassure him, we began to cross-question him with scientific projectile questions in gunnery, and from that branched off to personal inquiries as to his duties, and the sort of life on the Rock; for the private soldiers are not allowed to go beyond the Spanish lines. He said it was not a disagreeable life, but they now and then had some very "witty fatiggs," which we found out to be weighty fatigues, such as taking guns up and down, &c.

To-morrow we set off for Malaga as early as we can get our limited washing back from the laundress, being, in spite of our true British pride and glory in the spot, rather sick of Gibraltar.

CHAPTER XVIII

MALAGA, *March 20.*

UPON the road again, and, after our little oasis of decent living in Gibraltar and Africa, restored to the romantic luxury of Spanish hunger and Spanish fleas. Harry woke me early on Tuesday morning, and made me get up, though I murmured in my sleep about the impossibility of getting away while our linen remained in the hands of the faithless *lavandera*. However, when I was fairly awake and up, I joined him in *carambaing* severely at the chamber-maid. Such, indeed, was the force of our language, that it brought the shirts and stockings home wringing wet, and of course we had to send them back. While they were being ironed we ate our breakfasts, and had the last touch put to our passports, so that by the time our shifts returned, we were prepared to stuff them into the *alforjas* and be off.

Leading our ponies out of the stables, where they had been nearly a fortnight, we found them so stiff that they could hardly stir, and I actually thought mine had had his back broken by some unfair usage, and accordingly began to revile the stable-keeper—having my suspicions of him the more because he had wanted to buy our ponies; and now I thought he had made them drunk to prevent their going away, for they staggered about, and seemed, moreover, as much excited in their minds as they were infirm upon their legs.

O(a)tium

These suspicions, which were of course eminently absurd and unstable-minded, wore off as our little beasts, recovering the use of their legs (but not the serenity of their minds), began to prance, and kick, and rear, and jump bodily three or four feet up in the air, greatly endangering the equilibrium of the cloaks, and *mantas*, and *alforjas*, piled upon their backs.

The Moor, at last, in an extra fit of violence, managed to throw himself down, and scatter all that was on him in the dust. It occurred to us, as we had got out of the town, that if we were to mount, eleven stone or so additional on their backs might add to the gravity of their deportment. This succeeded very tolerably, and having passed the Spanish lines (where they did not search us, I am happy to say, for I had a lot of Cavendish tobacco), we came to deep sandy roads, which soon took the extra shine out of our animals, whom a crapulence of British corn, without any work, had thus stimulated to rebellion—oats being much stronger food than their accustomed barley.

Turning back for a farewell glance at the Rock, it struck us that it was rather in the form of a tomahawk, and it was suggested that it might as well have been called Scalpe instead of Calpe. The handle is, of course, the low end at the south. However, it was the sharp-notched edge seen in perspective which gave the idea.

The deep sandy road along which we were riding was, in fact, the beach of the sea, and for firmer footing I wanted to ride on the narrow rim of wet sand left by the slight ebb : but to this the Moor, for whose sole benefit the design had been entertained, resolutely objected, being strongly of opinion that some of the waves that kept bellowing and smacking their foamy lips, would certainly eat him up at a mouthful if he gave them a chance.

The Wreck

So I, being of course nearly as obstinate and unreasonable as himself, spurred him, and kicked him, and buffeted him, and got him very nearly as foamy and lathery as the sea, all for his own sake (originally), and to save him trouble. I could not help being reminded of philanthropists, and abolitionists, and Exeter Hall, and religious persecutions.

These speculations were put out of joint by arriving at a place where a great ship had been wrecked, evidently very recently. Huge flakes of massive, closely-pegged plank-work, torn to ragged pieces like brown paper ; masts, sails, and cordage, strewn about the beach, with the sea tumbling and roaring and booming close by the remains of what it had demolished, and hungry for more. Some men on horse-back, who came from Gibraltar to see after her, said she had gone to pieces in the great gale on Sunday (the day, by the way, we came over from Africa), and her cargo was all lost.

We inquired of the men the way and distance to Estepona. The distance appeared much further than we had calculated on, and the way turned inland from the beach, for the river Guadiaro could not be forded at its mouth, and we must go about a league inland to find a ferry. So we turned inland through mazy and uncertain paths across the *dehesa*, which, with its fragrant flowers and bushes, here sloped down to the sea.

“It seems a pity,” said Harry, with a sigh, “that so many sweet and pretty things should be almost thrown away. This is quite a fancy-sample of a wilderness, such as Don Quixote’s Cardenios, and Marcellas, and Dorotheas, might have chosen to hide their woes in.”

“I have an idea,” said I, interrupting him ; “we will put some of them at least (gathering a handful of lilies, and anemones, and other unknown flowers) to some poetical use,

A Floral Rite

and that is the legitimate end of flowers." (Here the other honourable gentleman was understood to suggest, "Bees also, perhaps!") "Well, honey is the food of poets." ("Possibly prose writers also," says he.) "However that may be," continued I, overriding these unimportant protests in the impetus of my enthusiasm, "here shall be performed a rite,"—kneeling down before a smooth sandy place, and with my dagger tracing a certain lady's name upon the ground (while I was doing which, the Moor also went down on his knees three times—wishing very much to have a roll in the warm sun-baked sand), and on each letter of that name I strewed a little heap of the wild flowers of the wilderness, that the winds and the rain might be longer in wearing that frail monument away.

Well, we jogged on, and on Guadiaro's further bank nearly came to dagger's-drawings with the ferryman about some inconsiderable amount of which he felt it his privilege to cheat us.

After this we approached the coast again, and got into very rough riding among mountain-tops from which we saw the white towers of Estepona rising from the blue sea at a great distance—in fact, a hopeless distance, as it was sloping towards sunset. However, we plunged recklessly down almost impassable gorges and lost ourselves in deep valleys (and were shouted at by peasants from the other side of one, for riding over precipitous, swampy barley-fields), and climbed out again, and at last, when it was dark, scrambled down to the sea-side where we found a fort and a *venta*.

Here we bought some fish of a little boy with a basket. A great heap of corn had to be moved out of the only spare place where we could sleep. They gave us one large mattress, and after supper we went to bed, I in my *jillabiah*

Venta del Castillo

and cloak, and Harry more as a Christian. Some way, I fancy, the fleas do not bite so much when one sleeps in one's clothes. As our *venta* was what Major Pendennis's man would have called "rayther a shy place," I went to sleep with my revolver in my hand—by the way, I do usually lay my little arsenal of pistols and dagger by me—but this night, for greater security that it should not be removed, I had kept it in my hand. A dangerous bedfellow.

Before my going to sleep, the family had come crouching through our room to theirs, of which this was an ante-chamber without a door. However, I had pinned up a quilt with the forks of supper, and under this they had come, stepping noiselessly, and gone to bed in the dark. They did not seem over-respectable people, and perhaps this dark and hushed procession had given my subsequent dreams a turn; for in the middle of the night I woke up suddenly, feeling myself touched, grabbed for my revolver, which had got lost among the bed-clothes and cloaks and *mantas*, and then in a sort of somnolent despair hit out wildly in the dark, and pitched into Harry, who woke up, and after mutual explanations, we went to sleep again.

Next morning before daybreak I was up—(and ye shall note, that when a man sleepeth in his clothes, getting up becometh a simpler operation, for he hath but to arise and shake himself and his toilet is accomplished, which avoidance of complicities much encourageth early rising)—and, after objurgating the drowsy host and shrill hostess for not having a chocolate-pot, had to make it (we luckily carried chocolate with us) with a pipkin and a wooden spoon, and burnt my fingers with the hot splashes. Harry was up by the time it was made, and we ate it before the *venta* door.

A Robber Host

Now, as we prepared to go, and asked for our account, though we had eaten our own fish, and drunk our own chocolate, and there was nothing to pay for but the cooking of the fish, the mattress, and the two horses, say, a *real* and a half for the cooking, four *reals* for the bed, and six *reals* for the two ponies, altogether eleven and a half *reals* (about half-a-crown), our fat thief of a landlord charged us nineteen. This we refused to pay, telling him we were no absurd spendthrifts from Gibraltar, but prudent men, who had travelled through all the Spains, seeing men and *ventas*, and acquiring an accurate knowledge of prices.

“You are Englishmen, and that is sufficient for me. I have known a *ventero* to charge a dollar to an Englishman for entering his *venta* and drinking a glass of water.”

“That *ventero* was a thief, and that Englishman was a fool. We are not fools, and we hope you are not a thief. One thing is certain, we will give you no more than twelve *reals*.”

Here the money was thrown on the ground, and we made as to ride away.

“You shall not depart thus—thieves yourselves and niggards,” said the fat host, who had been stimulated in the meantime by the shrill hostess, and advanced to seize Harry’s bridle.

Here Harry dismounted in haste and drew a pistol; whereat all the tag-rag of the *venta* ran like rabbits into the door, and the master retreated; the *mozo de la cuadra*, the bravest man of the party, stood his ground, and took up a great stone. While the pistol yet remained directed towards the still uplifted-stone, another power entered the field, in the person of an aged and rather shaky old corporal of the carabineers in the adjoining fort. However, Harry

What Might Have Happened

resisted his attempts at mediation, and called him an old donkey, which, as a man in authority, seemed quite to take him aback.

During the temporary lull, I may go into a slight diversion, describing what you have a right to expect would be the result of such an unwarranted and rash appeal to arms. The corporal, finding two refractory strangers who will not pay the reckoning of his friend and neighbour, and who, to make the matter worse, address himself as an old donkey, of course calls out the guard.

Nine men, in seedy uniform, appear with carabines, and take us into custody. We are put in a basket and hoisted up into the entrance hole of the tower, high above the ground. The guard return to their breakfast, of which, with customary Spanish politeness, they beg us to partake : we civilly decline ; but finding them not bad fellows, enter into conversational relations, and finally win the corporal's heart with a long cigar.

Meanwhile we put in a fair statement of our case to a now willing audience. They agree that, to be sure, it was a villainous imposition ; and, moreover, the *ventero* always cheats them in their *aguardiente*. We do a portrait of the corporal and a caricature of the *ventero*, and, moreover, doctor a sick carabineer, who has a fever, and lies in a dark corner of the donjon. Finally, we sally forth by the basket, the corporal (having been told he is the most valiant corporal in Spain, or the known world, which is the same thing) blusters for us, and threatens the *ventero*, who takes the twelve *reals*, and we find we have gained six *reals* and an adventure at the expense of half a day's journey, and a good many cigars.

However, this little history, which, if expanded with much interesting discourse, might look very well in print, would

What Did Happen

not be, strictly speaking, historical, except in Sir Robert Walpole's sense of the word, as it did not—in confidence—take place: for, seeing that the sun was going up upon our wrath, and that we were likely to lose time, and only get deeper into the mess, I recommended Harry to pay the money, and come away, though I had previously been of opinion, that if he had sat on his pony, and kept his rein clear by means of his pistol, we might have gone away, and left the money on the neutral ground. However, we had our scene, and perhaps it afforded its fourteen-penn'orth and twenty minutes' worth of amusement.

Leaving the Venta del Castillo, our road ran along the bay to Estepona, where we baited in a respectable *posada*, and breakfasted on turkeys' eggs (not bad things), fried bread, and the famous amber wine of the place, made in the *posada's* own vineyard. The hostess and her sister, cheerful young women, entertained us with much pleasant badinage while our breakfast was being cooked and eaten, and wished to have their portraits taken; but we said it was a long ride to Marbella, and we must press on.

To-day we had to pass a more than infernal number of rivers; eleven swollen torrents rushing down from the precipitous range of mountains which skirt the coast. These torrents were all level with the banks, some more than a hundred yards wide, running like salmon-leaps; and as the ground had been much torn and cut about by the recent floods (which must have been serious, for uprooted trees were lying about in all directions, and great tracts of the *dehesa* were smeared with mud and sand), we had no assurance that the current—usually up to our ponies' breasts—might not deepen into unforeseen channels, and swamp us in the surging tide. Harry, who got used to fording unknown rivers in the American deserts, took the

A Ruined City

lead, selecting the most turbulent places in the surface as the safest ; for, as another great navigator says,—

“ Passions are likened best to floods and streams,
The shallow murmur, but the deep are dumb ;”¹

and we met with no worse accident than wetting our feet, and the bottoms of our saddle-bags.

By the side of the sea, between Estepona and Marbella, we rode among the ruins of an ancient town,—whether of the Romans or the Moors, we could not say ; perhaps a little of both. Nevertheless, our want of antiquarian erudition did not prevent us moralising on the old masses of grey masonry, which the excellent grouting-cement of other days still holds together in grotesque forms of dilapidation, while around them and among them branch and bloom the shrubs of the *dehesa*.

“ Where now the wilderness is silent, save to the rustle of the *palmita* stem, the hum of bees and the sailing sea-bird’s scream, there were noisy streets, and bustling market-places, and columned angles of public buildings, at which hook-nosed, hawk-eyed Romans discussed the lately arrived proconsul. Or here arose the mosque, and shrill *muezzins* called the faithful to prayer, and kneeling Moslems muttered and bobbed their turbaned heads to the carpeted level of their slipperless feet.

Now, whatever it may have been, the place is deserted ; not a habitation of man within miles of it. The wreck of ages reminded us of the wreck we saw on the other side of Estepona.

Entering Marbella, and inquiring for the *Posada de la Corona*, we were directed this way and that way by inter-

¹ Sir Walter Raleigh.

Nasal Cadence

ested parties, and at last had to give up looking for it, and take up with the *San José*, which we stumbled upon in our fruitless search for the one recommended by Ford. Before the gateway a swaggering carabineer demanded our passports. We said he had no business to be in such a hurry, and that at night they would go in the proper way to the *jefe politico* (political chief); but he began to bluster violently, and be very troublesome, and evinced himself to be the worse for liquor; so we told him he was an impudent *borracho* (sot), and went to the stables, leaving him in the courtyard to vent his offended military dignity on the landlady, who seemed rather afraid of him. In the stables we had a parallel scene of dissension between the Moor and another horse. Afterwards, with much trouble, we got some sardines for supper, and I helped the *posadera* to salt and flour their shiny sides for the frying-pan.

Next morning we were off early, though the weather was not very promising, and rode along heavy sandy shores in a drizzling rain (I in my Moorish *jillabiah*, with the hood up, which kept me pretty dry), with nothing to enliven the road except a wearisome succession of watch-towers, at about two miles' distance from one another. The weather cleared up.

I had made a paper cigar, and had dropped the rein on the Moor's neck, to strike a light, when he suddenly started off, and plunging down a steep place, threw me on my face. My nose was considerably bruised, though I fell only on sand. If it had been anything harder, I don't think I should have got up with any nose at all.

At Fuengirola we baited at a new clean *posada*, whose master spoke to us in English; he was a brisk little man from Gibraltar, and had a most melancholy-looking blind wife. I was rather tired, and lay down on the sanded

Ben el Medina

kitchen floor before the fire, ate some bread and cold sardines, and smoked a pipe ; after which a short nap.

Roused up to go on again, in hopes of getting to Malaga that night, we went along, till some fellow-travellers we overtook on the road told us we must turn inland up the mountains, as the rocks rose out of the water, and we could not get round, the tide being high. After toiling up mountain-roads some time, a picturesque village came in sight ; and as Malaga was two or three leagues further, with bad roads, and not much more daylight, and weary beasts, which had been wading all day in the deep loose sand of the shore, we gave up all idea of going farther.

So we turned our ponies adrift, and sat down among the rocks to sketch the village, which some passers-by told us was Ben el Medina. Its church stands on a rock-ridge, the village in the cleft below, and there were two convenient palm-trees in the fore-ground. Harry, who is hopeless of colouring, did a creditable sketch in less ambitious sepia. I got tired of the village, and drew my pony, as he scrambled among the aloe-spiked rocks, nibbling at the tufts of grass. As the sun descended, and the peasants came flocking into the village with their cattle, we joined the rout. I don't think there is anything to relate about the *posada* more remarkable than that they gave us some walnuts rather bigger than hen's eggs.

Next morning we wound over the ups and downs of the mountain promontory we were crossing, till we came to a village on the brow overlooking a narrow plain between the hills and the sea, at the further end of which the towers of Malaga appeared. This plain was shockingly muddy, and there was an impassably flooded river, so we had to turn out of our way to find a ferry. The Moor was much alarmed at the idea of crossing, and I had to bandage his eyes with my pocket-handkerchief.

Malaga

Before reaching Malaga we sat down to eat some bread and cheese by the road-side, and were much stared at by some evident Englishmen riding out of Malaga. The hedges hereabouts are peculiarly luxuriant ; great aloe-spikes, like elephant's tusks, ten or twelve feet long, waving bulrushes bigger than pike-rods, and prickly pears, like grotesque aerial battles of huge green-winged toads, the great flat cactus-leaves growing out of one another in the most fantastic combinations. We overtook a man travelling with a heavy-pannied ass, who, to help himself along in the noonday heat, was holding on to the tail, and I drew him in my pocket-book as a sample of Andalusian industry.

Malaga is an uninteresting town, famous for its wine (which is to my taste sweet and nauseous), and for its climate, to which invalids come in numbers, though they all say the place bores them to death. The harbour is full of wrecks, half sunk, and full of water ; some of them with their decks torn off and floating loose. We climbed to the castle, very steep, and with a good view of the town and harbour.

In a courtyard, at the top, some soldiers were pitching a 32-pound shot from a scratch on the ground, and could throw it about eight or nine yards. They did it something in the manner of roundhand bowling, and we were rash enough to try, but failed signally. I was very hot, and as I have had a Niagara of sneezes since my damp ride on the beach yesterday, I thought it a good opportunity to rush down violently into a cold bath, which Harry said would probably kill me on the spot. Natheless, being an hydropathist in some degree, I persevered, and my cold has stopped at once.

As I was coming to the hotel I saw some silver buttons (Cordovese filigree), which I had seen and wished for in the same shop, as I passed through Malaga coming out to

Affectionate Reception

Seville, of a sort I have never seen elsewhere ; so I bought them to adorn my waistcoat. Then losing my way I came to a fruit-market, where eating a very large orange, I was saluted by some boy, whom I shortly recognised to be the servant of a Frenchman we met at Olvera. I don't know if I told you about him, or that we had made acquaintance with his wife at the Christobal Posada, in Ronda.

She lived in the room opposite, and fell heir to the remains of our tough mutton, when we went away. However, the boy would have me come with him to pay a visit to his master. The Frenchman received me in a large bare room of an out-of-the-way but vast old *posada*, with much cordiality. He said his wife had told him she met us at the Christobal. He sent for her, and when she came she fairly rushed into my arms.

I was a little embarrassed by so affectionate a reception, for I thought her husband might be jealous. However, he took it as a matter of course, and they fell to questioning me, with much interest in my prosperity, as to how I was getting on in my profession.

I opened my eyes, forgetting at the moment what my profession precisely was, but he proceeded to ask if we had done any portraits. I said, we were only arrived to-day, and told him the name of our *posada*, and we should be most thankful if he could recommend us to any customers. "*Ma foi,*" said he, "*je ferai mon possible !*" so I went home to dinner.

After dinner we wandered about the town, and came to a motley and gilt obelisk, set up, I believe, to Espartero's friends who were shot. Here we sat together on a stone bench in the *plaza*, where I had sat alone as I loitered about Malaga, a forlorn and solitary wanderer, on my way out. This is the first place in which our present journey has

A Pleasant Contrast

crossed my former one, and I could not help being struck by the pleasant contrast. It certainly was rather desolate work then, and I felt a fresh gratitude to Harry, which I fear, as is usual with stoical young men, I did not sufficiently express.

To-day, being Sunday, we remain here ; to-morrow we go on to Granada by Velez and Alhama.

CHAPTER XIX

GRANADA, *March 25.*

WE only stayed two nights in Malaga, for we were anxious to see Granada.

Velez is the first stage, and as it is a short one, we did not start early, intending to sleep there. The road for a league or so out of Malaga, I suppose out of compliment to the numerous English invalids, was more alive with beggars than any part of Spain we have seen before. They were also more elaborately squalid, in the extreme picturesque of misery. This showing a design upon the sympathies of our countrymen, the British spirit rebelled against the idea of being taken in, and we passed great numbers crawling like aged broken-down vermin, out of caves and crannies in the roadside. But then, reflecting that we had lately given very little by way of alms, I said to Harry, "I don't see why we shouldn't give these wretches something! After all, the determined congregation of beggars to a place where English people are plentiful *is* a compliment to our national benevolence. These beggars *are* very old and wretched, and they only cultivate their misery and dirt like any other estate, and bring it to the best market."

Hereupon Harry, who happened to have a good deal of copper money, began to disburse liberally—so much so, that an old man riding behind us on an ass with empty panniers, seeing him throw the immense sum of a couple of two-*cuarto*

A Mounted Mendicant

pieces to an old hag with one eye and a grizzly beard, thought it a pity to lose the opportunity of getting something himself, since little fortunes were in process of being scattered about the road with such reckless and unbounded profusion. He came up alongside, and entered into a piteous detail of his immediate losses and general poverty.

At first we did not make out exactly what he would be at, and listened to his grievances civilly; but when he wound up with plain begging, the originality and boldness of the idea of a mounted beggar struck us in so humorous a light that we could not help laughing in his face. His story was, that he had come into Malaga that morning from a distance, and had sold some garden-stuff for two dollars, of which he had been in some way robbed or cheated, and now he had not an *ochavo* in the world. We rode along before him talking about his case, when, as the road had turned in from the coast and become lonely, an idea struck me of a sudden.

“Suppose we rob him,” I said to Harry; “I’ll be bound he has the money for his cabbages safe in his pocket; at any rate we will see.” He protested that it was eminently absurd, and that we might get into a tremendous scrape—but I would not listen to reason. I foresaw it would be an original adventure. So I turned my pony’s head and waited for him to come up. He quickened his pace and overtook us again, making a still more piteous face than before, in the evident impression that we had taken his misfortunes into consideration, and were about to do something handsome for him. What, therefore, must his surprise and horror have been, when, as he got fairly between us, I drew my six-barrelled revolver, and thus addressed him.

“Impudent old scoundrel, stand still—if thou stirr’st

San Robino Hoodo

hand or foot, or openest thy mouth, I will slay thee like a dog! Thou, greedy miscreant, who art evidently a man of property and hast an ass to ride upon, art not satisfied without trying to rob the truly poor of the alms we give them. Now, it is the religion of the *Ingleses*, founded on the precept and practice of the celebrated Saint *Robino Hoodo*, to levy funds from stingy old curmudgeons like thyself and distribute to the poor. Therefore at once hand over the two dollars of which thou spakest, otherwise——” Here I clicked the cock of the pistol.

During this harangue, which was delivered gravely (though Harry was obliged to turn away his face at the mention of Robin Hood as a “*santo muy famoso*”), the old culprit had gone down on his knees, and was trembling violently, and muttering deprecations, for the love of the Virgin. But as I did not relax the stern expression of my countenance, he said in a shaky voice—

“One moment, *caballeros*, and I will give you all I possess. But I am poor, very poor, and I have a sick wife at the disposition of your worships——”

“Wherefore art thou fumbling at thy foot? Thou carriest not thy sick wife in thy shoe?”

“I can’t untie the string, my hand trembles so; will your worship permit me to take out my knife?”

I nodded, seeing he was really frightened, and not at all likely to do any mischief with it. He cut the thong, which had been knotted over and over again, and taking the shoe off his stockingless and filthy foot, turned out a handful of small silver, chiefly *two-real* pieces, into my hand. He then groped in his breeches’ pocket, and brought out a good deal of copper, which he also gave up with a very submissive air. I replaced my pistol in my *faja*, and made as if I would ride on. As soon as he saw his life was no

Velez Malaga

longer in danger, his pecuniary loss began to work on his constitution, and he burst into tears.

“Come, now! Make an end—or we shall feel it our duty to shoot thy donkey, that thou may’st have something to whimper *for*.”

It was a piteous sight to see the grey-haired old impostor crying like a child, and I thought we had punished him enough ; so I said—

“Now we know thou *art* poor, since we have taken thy money ; we will give thee a trifle. There” (dropping his money into his hat, which he held out timidly) “is something by way of charity ; and take heed that thou begg’st not again when thou hast money in thy pocket, and so remain with God, my friend.”

With this we rode on, and were in some slight fear for the rest of the day, that he might find some of the Guardia Civil, and send them after us to take us up. But I dare say it never occurred to him, as we left him no poorer, that our offence was actionable.

Velez Malaga is not a very interesting place. I know nothing remarkable about it, except that the *Cautivo* in *Don Quixote* landed here with his fair *Morisca*, on his escape from Algiers. I trudged to the market-place and bought a pound of sardines for dinner, and afterwards helped to cook them. The landlady and her pretty sister came up after dinner, and told us that there was a company of players about to perform, so we went. It was a shabby little theatre, with bad actors, the prompter being the most audible of the company ; so we left the second act, and came home to bed.

Next morning, in saddling, I discovered a great misfortune which has fallen upon me. A small running sore has come on the shoulder of the Moor. Harry says it is only

Puerto del Comar

to be expected with such clumsy, straw-stuffed saddles ; especially as I have ridden all the way, since our first disaster close to Seville, without stirrups, which of course works the saddle more about on his back than if there were a support to balance one's self by. I cut the pad open, and pulled a good deal of the stuffing out in the obnoxious place ; and led him, determining to walk as much as I could, till we got to Granada.

Acting on this intention with vigour, I walked the first two leagues, Harry entertaining me on the way with a treatise on sore backs, of which so many of his party's horses died in the desert. He says, if we were obliged to press on without stopping, as they had to do, the Moor's term of life would be about a month ; and then, after passing through a state when at every staggering step the spurs forced a groan out of his wasted body, he would drop at last, and be eaten by wolves and vultures. But we should have a chance of curing him at Granada, staying there ten days or so.

We discussed many of the sovereignest things for a sore back, but I have declared myself for treating the Moor like a Christian, that is, at least, as I should treat myself. I shall poultice at first to get out the inflammation, and then wash the place with a solution of lunar caustic. At Viñuela, where we breakfasted, I washed his back with hot water, and left a wet rag on to cool the place. Soon after Viñuela the road begins to steepen.

At Velez we had turned inland to go up over the mountain-ridge which runs paralld with the coast. High above us appeared a deep round-bottomed nick between two flat-topped mountains, across which gap lay a great white bolster of cloud. I am aware it would be more in the acknowledged style of descriptive scenery to call it a "giant

A Moorish Chronicle

portal of the mountain fastnesses, curtained, &c.," but that would not give you so true an idea.

To this pass we rose by weary zig-zags. The rock-walls at its entrance are precipitous and full of fissures and caves, especially on the left. One of these, "El nido del Moro" (the Moor's nest), high up in the almost perpendicular face of the rock, is said to have been the lair of that celebrated marauder, Sahib-el-Comr, or rather his principal entrance, for the whole mountain was supposed to be perforated with a labyrinth of winding passages leading to and from innumerable vaulted halls.

STORY OF SAHIB-EL-COMR AND THE QUEEN AELFA.¹

In these caves Sahib and his band dwelt at ease, nourishing their hearts in luxury, and served by the sons and daughters of Eblis. The road from Granada to the sea passed immediately below the nest of this vulture, who, with the claw of rapine, appropriated many of King Ibnulahmar's choicest importations, wherefore that potentate sundry times had sharpened for his neck the sword of retribution.

But the search proved fruitless, and manifold expeditions returned, reporting that the Jinns had closed up the old passages against them, and opened others for the depredator's escape. At length, a favourite of the harem, having been dispossessed of several bales of embroidery from Fez, she, being a lady of great spirit, declared that she herself would find a way to chastise the marauder. She first persuaded the old king to close the eyes of circum-

¹ Abou Kizeb.—Cronica de los Sultanes de Granada, traducida por Gazmoño de Mentiras.

Queen Aelfa's Scheme

spection with the seal of confidence, and he swore beforehand to abide by the plan which she thus disclosed :—

“It is well known, O king, that force will not overcome this traitor, who is assisted by the powers of the air ; but though man can do nothing in such a case, it does not follow that a woman might not. Send me, therefore, with a dozen of the most worthless of thy guard, as if I were going down to the sea.”

“*Wallah aalyeki!*” cried the old king ; “and if thou hadst fifty of my best men, what are they to this hornets’ nest, which exceedeth an hundred, beside the Jinns of the mountain ? This dog would certainly slay thy escort, and take possession of thyself.”

“That is what I anticipate. He will take me to his bosom, and when I have obtained his confidence, I will betray him into thy hand.”

“But in the meantime, and perchance for ever, I lose thee, O daughter of my soul. Cannot some of thy women do this in thy place ?”

“It was said by the sage, Wisaakir, that there is no great gain without some little loss ; as to sending one of my women, which of them can I trust ? How can I tell that she might not prefer the robber’s cave to Alhambra’s gilded prison, and never attempt to return ?”

“Thou sayest well. Nay,” added the old king, thoughtfully stroking his beard, “how am I sure even of thee ? As the singer hath said,

‘Deem not that any oath can bind
The fickle troth of womankind !
They change their minds and break their oaths,
As they break bread and change their clothes.
Their love and hate in treacherous trim
Are poised upon a captious whim——’”

A Lovers' Quarrel

None but a prophet can affirm with certainty how far the king might have extended this derogatory quotation. But at the sixth line Queen Aelfa arose in silence, and as a flask of vinegar might be corked with a rose-bud, she stopped his ungracious rhymes with her lips. For, as the singer saith again,

“The silent touch of woman's lips,
To warp man's will to hers,
All sweetest eloquence outstrips
Of wisest counsellors.”

The conference closed, and the queen did as she would.

Now, of the chroniclers of the reign of Ibnulahmar (peace be upon him), some affirm that there had been a previous acquaintance between Queen Aelfa (who was the daughter of a worker in the precious metals dwelling in the Zacatin) and this noted robber. One relates that, when Sahib once had entered Granada, in the disguise of a *fakir*, to sell some rich spoil, they had met clandestinely, and became enamoured mutually.

It is certain, however, that when the queen was captured according to her preconcerted scheme, she dwelt in the caves happy and contented, without retrospection or regret. In the third year occurred a quarrel between the lovers, and the fountain of their affections became, as it were, ink and vinegar. The cause is not ascertained, but it is said to have occurred shortly after a large capture of damsels at a village wedding in the vicinity. The virtuous and constant Aelfa casually happened at this conjuncture to remember the promise she had made to the old king, and resolved to betray the robber.

Treachery never lacks an instrument. There was a black humpbacked rogue of great bodily strength, though of but

Caleb-esh-Sheytan

little intelligence, by name Caleb-esh-Sheytan, which, being interpreted, signifies the Hound of Satan. He had long arms and legs, a very broad back, all doubled up into an expanse of shoulders on which you might have set a pack-saddle. He was used as a beast of burden to carry off plunder, being very swift and sure-footed on the mountains. He was also of use in countenancing an idea that the robber was assisted by Eblis, from his plausibly fiendish appearance.

This man, having been much beaten for attempts to pilfer portions of the booty committed to his back (for, in that he was so stupid, his defalcations were usually discovered), a continual course of castigation had soured his temper, so that the fuel of vengeance ready piled in the bedarkened chamber of his heart, awaited only a spark from the forge of suggestive invention to be kindled to a conflagration.

What he wanted in ingenuity Aelfa supplied ; and she despatched him with a letter to the king, further commanding Caleb to conduct the troops which would be intrusted to his guidance by an unfrequented approach down a long sloping corridor, whose mouth opened on the top of the mountain. He had not been gone many hours, when she, with that rapid decision of purpose which characterises the female sex, changed her mind ; therefore, with tears and contrition, she confessed her guilt, and disclosed the plot.

Having reproached her with the bitterest of reproaches, and poured forth upon her head the uttermost revilings of scorn, till the colour of her countenance was changed by the blankness of her confusion and her shame, Sahib finally forgave her, and they addressed themselves to prepare against the enemy. He blocked up the passage with great masses of rock, leaving a huge heap of subtile explosive

The Catastrophe

powder, of which he knew the secret, and which in these days it is thought may be applied to projectile purposes. Aelfa and Sahib waited behind the obstruction at the appointed hour of the night. They heard the stealthy approach of feet, and then the thick voice of the negro saying, "Here is a great heap of sand!" for his feet were in the powder. "The queen has doubtless strewn it along the way that our steps make not a noise on the rocks," replied the captain of the troop.

"We are betrayed," cried the negro, as his hands came against the great stones which blocked up the way. "If we are betrayed, thou shalt not escape," said the soldier, as it would seem, despatching Caleb, who shrieked, and was afterwards silent; whereupon Sahib dropped his touchwood into the train, and retreated with the feet of celerity. After a little, the powder exploded, and the whole expedition were killed except one man, who had hung back in the dark, and stood at the mouth of the cavern, irresolute what to do.

The fire-blast knocked him down, and burnt off the greater part of his beard. He recovered, and in due time repaired to Granada, where he reported "that he had been the first man to follow the black demon down a bottomless pit, to which Gehennah was as a rat-hole; that when they had gone several furlongs into the heart of the mountain, Eblis had appeared in their way in the form of a fiery dragon, into whose mouth Caleb had walked, as if it had been his own house, and sat down among the dreadful teeth, as if they had been palm-trees in his own courtyard. Hereupon the dragon snorted fire and brimstone for the space of a quarter of an hour, the negro imp grinning with satisfaction in the midst of it all the while, and clapping his long black bony hands. All the men were soon burnt and

Royal Consolation

smothered, as he himself should have been, if he had not (knowing the sort of work he was going to undertake) used the precaution to extract the whole chapter of Alkafreen out of the Koran (which his wife sewed, leaf by leaf, all under his dress), and to carry the *soorat el fatihat el kitab*¹ in his hand, which he had set over his eyes and nose and mouth ; but it was unluckily not large enough to cover his beard.

The king, being very much disheartened with the failure of his expedition, and Aelfa's treachery, saw no better way to soothe his despondency than by cutting off the singed head of the narrator ; which was accordingly done.

After passing the great gap in the mountain-barrier, the road, without descending, crossed a flat green plain, or *vega*, very fertile, and in which, if you had been dropped there, you would never have guessed you were three or four thousand feet above the level of the sea. Around, still high above us, stood the snow-capped hills, with great white clouds leaning upon them. As we rode along, the wind rose, and the clouds descended upon us. We had now passed the flat land, and were winding among the turns of low hills over which swept the galloping vapours. Every now and then we could see the distant peaks of snow through a momentary rent in this rushing mist, and fitful gleams of sunshine would light up specious semblances of embattled towns among the nearer outlines of the rocky hills, and then roll the landscape up again in a moist blanket, through which it was impossible to see more than twenty yards ahead of us.

I was very tired, and, impatient with the long-delayed hope of getting to our day's work's end, ejaculated the

¹ The opening prayer of the Koran.

Alhama

appropriate "Ay de mi, Alhama" with much fervour many times. The few peasants we met on the way seemed in league with one another to put us out of heart; for the nearer we approached, the further they represented Alhama to be. At last, at the top of a hill, when we had almost given up Alhama, as a Mrs. Harris Gamped up by Lord Byron and Mr. Ford, the mist suddenly blew away, and a little greystone, rock-girt nest of a town, very different from what we had expected, appeared in the hollow beneath. The main street, down which we scrambled, is a steep slope of solid rock, across which grooves are cut to give some little foothold. The *Casa de los Caballeros*, recommended by the guide-book, seemed an unpromising place, and we had to put our ponies in a sort of coal-hole. I was dreadfully tired and hungry, which resulted in a certain impatience of temper against which my philosophy is not proof under such trials. There was no *mozo de la cuadra* to get a place made for our ponies among the fuel in the coal-hole, except an imbecile grandfather of the establishment, a very helpless and garrulous old man, who could not even get us any barley.

The woman of the house, too, was stupidly inquisitive about the hot water which I had asked for to wash the Moor's sore shoulder; and I showered the effect of my irascible exhaustion upon both their heads in such a volley of *arriero* language, that Harry was obliged to remind me of my official capacity as the mild and persuasive spokesman of the party. So the *huespeda*, by degrees, heated some water in the frying-pan, and the old man gabbled, and fussed, and potted about till the ponies were finally provided for. I washed the Moor's shoulder, and found it had not got so much worse as I expected. The landlady made us an excellent supper of water-*souchet*, fried anchovies, and salad.

Calculation of Mileage

The old grandfather sat in the blazing chimney-corner, playing with his grandchild, a stout little boy about five years old, of whom he was very proud. In intellect they were about on a level; but the little boy, in the vivacious wilfulness of his youth, had entirely the upper hand of the pottering old patriarch, who seemed quite happy and unconscious of the infant tyranny under which he laboured.

The ride from Alhama to Granada is grand and dreary. Barren undulating table-land, without a tree to break the sky-line of rugged mountain summits all around. The day was dark and windless, and the vapours, which had been scouring about overnight, lay in great, soft, lazy pillows and feather-beds among the snowy jags.

We overtook a crippled soldier with his crutches, charged on an ass, whose master encouraged him to keep up his pace with many thwacks from behind. The soldier was in great spirits, returning to his native Granada after an absence of a dozen years, singing and loquacious, and quite confident that his native air would soon set him on his legs again. He had been broken down by some artillery accident at Tarifa. It appeared he paid a *real* a league for being carried on the donkey—about $2\frac{3}{4}d$. We began to compare our own expenses, and cast up our account to form an average of our expense per mile. It cost us about three shillings and sixpence to four shillings each day for ourselves and our beasts. This, divided by twenty, the number of miles we generally go in a day, makes an average of a little over $2d$. a mile, which is not ruinous. Of course in the large towns it is more, this being calculated for the scale of costs on the road.

We had been descending gradually towards an isolated mound, which stood at the bottom of a long slope, and had been in sight many miles; in fact, ever since turning the

The Vega

steep brow out of the valley of Cacin. As we approached this mound in the bottom of a broad space among the mountains, it grew larger and larger; and when we had baited at *La Mala*, and came to ascend it, it turned out quite a mountain in itself. We were in a high state of anxiety to catch the first glimpse of Granada, and busy building all sorts of impossible Alhambras in the air. Ronda, we recollected, had belied our fond anticipations, but Granada was an acknowledged wonder of the world, and must at any rate be very striking.

Meanwhile the edge of the hill was turned, and Granada lay before us, about four miles off. Do you expect a burst of enthusiasm? Alas! I fear there is nothing earthly can bear the fatal ordeal of a previous reputation—not even the great Niagara, which a disappointed American once said was a “perfect failure.” Granada from our first view was a plain-looking largish town, on a slight slope at the foot of an ordinary mountain. We could hardly make out the Alhambra from the hill-side. The famous Vega, over a corner of which we were looking, was of a dingy green. The day was cloudy, and the fine amphitheatre of mountains looked cold and dreary; besides, we were used to mountains. However, as we rode along, some glimpses of sunshine kindled purple gleams among the distant peaks, and sprinkled emerald lights about the Vega, and here and there brought out bright towers and spires, marking the scattered hamlets of the plain.

Our arrival took place about the hour of sunset, when the good people of Granada, as well as the bad and indifferent I suppose, were sauntering about the *paseo* in a body. We were very considerably stared at, being, I should think, about as remarkable objects as Buckstone and Wright got up as elaborate Adelphi countrymen might be, riding

Guides

into London by Rotten-row on cart hobby-horses. We had forgotten the name of our hotel too, and had to go about making inquiries among the staring crowd. The people were all dressed in the pink of Parisian fashion, and no doubt looked upon us as a pair of exceedingly quaint barbarians from some rustic village of the Sierras. At last we found some one who knew the name of our landlord, which was all we recollected, and directed us to the *Fonda de la Amistad*.

To our great delight the portmantos had arrived from Seville, and we should be able to dress ourselves like Christians once again. They had come some days before, and had been got through the Custom-house (locked and sealed up) by the persuasion of the fair Señora Vasquez, whose *lindos ojos* (*beaux yeux*) had smiled away the official punctilios of the *doganero*. We rushed into the luxuries of soap and water and clean linen.

While we were dressing, our door was beaten by not less than a dozen applicants, who expressed, through the key-hole, in various degrees of approximation to French and English, a desire to guide us about Granada. Everybody here is a guide, from the ostler in the stables—who took occasion, while I was washing the Moor's sore shoulder, to recommend himself—to the man who showed us up to our rooms, and mentioned that he was not the waiter, but a guide, as he brought the hot water. This was a good-looking young man, dressed in the pink of *majo* fashion, all over silver brooches and tags, whom we had taken to be the brother of our hostess. He proved to be a son of the celebrated Bensaken; and while we were at dinner he returned to the charge, bringing two volumes of testimonies to his father's qualities as a guide. We told him that it was against our principles ever to be led about, and that, in fact,

A Vow

we had made a vow to stumble through Spain without guidance ; a course which might be the means of our missing many remarkable objects, to whose possible loss we reconciled ourselves, in consideration of the pleasure we took in going our own way.

CHAPTER XX

GRANADA, *March 27.*

WE had been up sketching in the *Torre de la Vela*; that is to say, the watch-tower, or Tower of the Candle, for I believe *vela* means both, acquiring its metaphorical sense from the vigilant uses of a rushlight. From the *Torre de la Vela*, which stands out on the end of Alhambra's hillspur, and highest of Alhambra's towers, we had been sketching the broken arches of Alkasabah.

I was cramped with lying along a deep little window-niche in the stair, about as big as half a stone coffin, into which cool and shady hole I had stowed myself to avoid the glare and heat at the top of the tower. Lying on my left elbow to draw, and screwing my back and neck to peep out of the aperture of this limited studio, exhausted my patience rapidly; and I scrambled out of my lair backwards, and went up to the top to see how Harry was coming on. He was in process of executing a very superior work of art, but it was not half finished.

Descending by the Post-office (which is in the same street with our *Fonda de la Amistad*, and in the direct way between it and the Alhambra), we found the postmaster sorting letters. On inquiring with a palpitating heart if there was a letter for my name, I was told it was "*regular que no*" (probable there was not), but that the list would be out in a few minutes. When that portentous document

La Bella Sofia

was wafered up, it proved a blank as far as I was concerned; but knowing, that as many things in Spain are very inefficiently done with much pomp and circumstance, the names on the list bear often but a very vague resemblance to the real address on letters, I lingered pensively studying the column of "*cartas estranjerias*," till I fixed upon "No. 381, Don Gregorio Esqua," which I asked to look at.

I had but slight hopes, and the official seemed to hesitate in giving it me, having so suddenly changed my name. But I suppose he judged by my exclamation of delight on seeing the handwriting, that I was the rightful owner, for he allowed me to purchase it (at about twice its weight in silver) and carry it away in triumph. In transcribing the address he had begun boldly with the first Christian name George, which he had rendered Gregorio—passing over the intermediate writing as works of supererogation he had taken the Esquire—slightly modified—for the patronymic. However, I got my letter.

By the way, we have met here the loveliest creature we have ever seen in all Spain. We had a letter of "*recomendacion*" to her mother, the accomplished Marquesa P——. We had heard she was very lovely from our friends in Seville (but have learnt to mistrust the agreement of Spanish and English tastes). Nevertheless on calling, the day after our arrival, we were both struck, to use a base but forcible metaphor, all of heaps.

She has a splendid figure, tall and stately; a beautiful fresh clear complexion, rosy cheeks, and cherry lips (which are very rarely combined with the raven tresses and flashing eyes—the common, often the only, ornaments of her countrywomen); and is besides very clever and fascinating. We were both much struck, I said; but Harry, whose

Jinnât-al-Aarif

heart was "without incumbrance," of course much the most of the two.

Here ladies are much more free and easy on a short acquaintance than in our arctic zone, where the heart takes a whole season of stuffy drawing-room atmosphere just to begin to thaw a little. Last night (which was only our third visit, though by the way we had met another night at the Opera) I had in my button-hole a largish little bunch of violets, which had been given me by the woman showing the gardens of the Generalife. This beautiful palace, which stands a little higher up the mountain than the Alhambra, is not called from any distinguished general having lived there, but from *jinnât-al-aarif*, meaning, in Arabic, the gardens of the cunning man—that is to say, the architect, who, after building the Alhambra, made himself, to my mind, a much pleasanter dwelling-place among terraces and hanging-gardens on the brow of the Sierra del Sol.

These fatal violets I bore in my button-hole, and their history you may read in the following lines:—

THE VIOLETS AND THE ROSE.

The gardens of the cunning man that framed the fairy halls
Which grim Alhambra hides within her rough red sandstone
walls ;

The gardens of the cunning man, 'mid terraces of flowers,
Perched higher still o'erlook the hill of battlements and towers ;
Up there I got some violets, that wooed the mountain breeze,
And wore them in my button-hole till we had had our teas !
Then I put on my smartest clothes to pay an evening visit
At the Marquesa What's-her-name's ! Her name's no matter—
is it ?

Now this Marquesa What's-her-name a daughter fair she had, a
More lovely creature to my mind than any in Granada.
To her I gave the violets ; and, as you may suppose,
Because the violets were sweet she put them to her nose !

The Alhambra

She raised her hand up to her head of long, black, glossy hair, And from its folds undid the rose which Andaluzas wear! She held the two in either hand—she seemed in doubt to be— She kept the violets herself, and gave the rose to me. I stuck it in my button-hole, she twined them in her hair— There was some room for sentiment, but I have none to spare. Indeed, I could not help but think, upon my homeward way, Were she aware of this affair, what would my — say?"

But now I must set seriously to work to tell you something about the Alhambra. As we went up into it the first time, I said to Harry that it reminded me of Windsor Castle. He said, "That may be very true, but it won't do to say in our book, at least as an original remark, for Ford has said the same." Indeed, Ford's description of the Alhambra, which I read for the first time after Harry's remark, is so perfect that it leaves little to be said. Therefore, if you want to know about the Alhambra, read Ford's account.

But, as so minute a description necessarily travels over this massive pile like a telescopic field of vision, creeping bit by bit along the surface, I may as well give you a sketch in coarse outline, that you may catch a rude general idea more easily.

The Alhambra stands on two toes of the foot of the Sierra del Sol. There is a long mound (about 300 feet above the level of the town), cut off from the mountain by a rocky ravine, and towards the town, forked into the two toes above-mentioned. On the great-toe end stands the Torre de la Vela, backed by all the principal buildings of the Alhambra. On the little-toe end are the Torres Bermejas (something like Windsor Castle's crump end), backed by straggling battlement-towers.

Between these toes there is a deep corry, full of tall, thin-

Charles V., his Palace

boled trees, which slopes up to the level of the hill, and expands into gardens and gravel-walk parades. You enter by a Janus-faced gate at the bottom (it is of a tolerable Christian aspect out, and indifferent Moorish inside), and you see some dingy red towers peeping down through the trees on either hand. There are three paths, but you turn to the left, slanting zig-zag up the steep side of the corry. After a while you get to a Moorish archway in a tall red tower. Over the gateway is the magic hand, engraved like an Egyptian hieroglyphic in the stone. You go up a shabbyish passage, open to the sky, and come out in a large courtyard at the top of the hill. Here you see before you the square yellow sandstone palace, begun by Charles V. The inside is unfinished, and through one of its round windows we saw a goat skip across a gap between two blocks of unfinished stonework. Behind this great solecism, and tacked on to it anyhow, without any attempt at harmony, or even straightness, are the remains of the palace of the Moorish kings of Granada, which I will not stop here to describe. They run along the precipice-edge above the deep ravine, at whose bottom murmurs the Darro. It is only seen from this valley that the Alhambra presents any remarkable beauty on the outside.

And here sitting, after sunset, among the slender marble shafts of the breezy galleries, it is, to a certain degree, a realisation of romance to watch the stars glimmering out of the darkening sky, and the lamps from the blackening town below, and to say to one's self: "This is the Alhambra. This is the palace of dreams which Washington Irving set up in our imaginations, sculptured with more graceful forms, painted with richer colours, and enamelled with brighter *azulejos* and *tarkeeshes*, than even the cunning man could accomplish, or the lavish Ibnulahmar could pay

Washington Irving Elaarif

for." For truly, when we compare the reality (by daylight) with the description, Washington Irving appears the cunninger man of the two.

But when the moon arises above the pass of Loja, and strikes across the Vega, pointing its towers with silver, and dancing on its streams; then, as her beams creep slowly from corner to corner along Alhambra's walls, piercing the slender-shafted arches, and lighting up the delicate tracery of the interior—then, reality, robed in moonshine, becomes romance indeed—then, the shadowy outlines of a real enchanted palace tremble upside down in the *Berkah's* watery mirror; and the very indifferent lions which stand (godfathers to their court) round the alabaster fountain become imposing quadrupeds, and vindicate their high renown.

We had formerly been disappointed with the Alhambra, having, with our usual luck, seen it first on the wrong side, where it hardly can be seen at all. Then within, though very fine, it is not so richly decorated as the Alcazar of Seville, the site and extent of which are, however, greatly inferior. Altogether, let the traveller prepare to be disappointed as much with Granada as he has been accustomed to be at other celebrated places, and with other celebrated beauties or celebrated men. Where was there ever a first impression which could stand against the fatal reaction of previous eulogy?

We went to see the Cartuxa Convent this morning, where there is a large series of cleverish amateur paintings of martyrdoms, &c., by one Cotan, an ancient monk of the Carthusian order. There was one picture of a saint, supposed by himself and his pious friends to have died in the odour of sanctity, who on arriving in the other world appears to have been most unpleasantly undeceived.

La Cartuja

The picture represents his coffin being opened in the presence of San Bruno ; and the supposed saint, with his hair on end, and his features distorted into the most agonising expression, is explaining to his former fraternity some fatal mistake in their system. There are sundry familiar spirits from limbo attending in the capacity of sheriffs' officers—very quaint devils. The pictures are curious and spirited : some of the faces very well painted : but the artist evidently never studied anatomy or perspective, and his drawing is generally out of proportion.

We have given up the idea of going back to the *ferias* at Seville, and the Holy Week. We should lose a long while going back ; as it is, we shall miss Cordova, which we ought to have seen. But Harry is in a hurry to move northwards.

CHAPTER XXI

JAEN, *April 5.*

POULTICING to begin with, and washing with strong solution of lunar caustic, took the inflammation out of the Moor's shoulder, and helped the place to heal up in time to leave Granada, after the ten or twelve days we had proposed to stay. The new saddles we have bought are of better construction, and do not touch the obnoxious place; so I think we have now reason to be thankful that this rather formidable difficulty is well over for the present.

We rode out of the city by the Camino real de Jaen, and soon we came in sight of the *arco de media legua*, a single arch (of an aqueduct, I think), which crosses the road at about half a league from Granada. It grew nearer and nearer, as the feet of our unconscious ponies pattered along the road; and as the pattering turned to a deep hollow sound beneath the echoes of the arch, "Goodness me!" I cried, "my cloak is gone!" This great, heavy, folded mass, weighing, I should say, at least ten pounds, had slipped off from where I had laid it across the pommel of the saddle and my thighs, without either my feeling it go, or Harry seeing it.

We turned our ponies' heads, and saw a man running towards us in the distance. Luckily, we had been riding only at a foot's pace. The man came up very much out of

A Recovery

breath, and said some workmen had found the cloak, and had wanted to keep it ; but he, being—as he left us to infer—an honest man, had run to overtake us, if possible. I returned with him, and found, sure enough, that there was an indisposition on the part of the workmen to give up their booty. The spokesman made difficulties about believing me to be the real owner ; but I gave him a specification of the cloak,—that it had *vueltas rojas* (red facings) and silver clasps, and moreover that it had been *ensanchado atras, por no ser antes capa redonda* ; that is to say, a broad gusset or goar had been let in to make it wider. These specifications, properly seasoned with imprecational expletives, obtained me the *capa*, and having given my informant a *peseta*, I cantered back.

Harry was waiting for me at the door of a *venta*, where I had turned back. He had found a companion, who, on my return, saluted me with congratulations on the recovery of my cloak. This man walked along with us some way. His name was José Vigil—a blacksmith and farrier in some village at the other side of Granada,—travelling on foot as far as Jaen, where he was going to pass the Holy Week with some relations. He hoped to see “*El rostro del Señor*” before his return. We did not know exactly what he meant at first, till we recollected that there is one of the numerous duplicates of the “*santa rostro*” (holy face) impressed in the napkin of, I believe, St^a. Veronica in the reliquary of Jaen.

“And of what nation may you be, *caballeros* ?”

“You shall guess. What do you think ?”

“Perchance Italians ?”

“No ; I am an Englishman, and my friend here is a Frenchman. It is a custom in our countries, which are neighbouring, as it were La Mancha and Andalusia, for the

A Piece of Gratuitous Fiction

children to learn the languages of both. My father had a friend in France, and they made an agreement that for three years I should stay during half of each year with them in Paris, and he the other six months with us in London. So we became friends—much the same as brothers. And, besides, my companion has a sister very amiable. I have long loved her, and this year we were to have been married, only my health was not good; and as my companion, who is in the wine-trade, had some business in Andalusia, it was agreed that we should pass this winter together in a southern climate, for up there it is very cold. Now, as the summer is coming on, we are returning northwards; and as we came out by sea, we have bought these ponies, and are returning by land to see the country.”

“You are fortunate *caballeros* to have the means of travelling. I have often wished I could travel myself, for it must be a pleasant thing to see the world. But I am not a rich man, like you. I have no spare money to wear in horse-shoes and wheel-tires: I live by making them.”

“Every man is rich, my good man, who can make an honest living, and who has wisdom enough to be content. Happiness dwells quite as much at home in the workshop of healthy labour as on the road; and discontent often travels both on horseback and in coaches.”

“That is true, señor; and, thanks be to God, I am not dissatisfied with my lot. But God made the world for us all, and doubtless it is well worth seeing. They tell me our country is far behind France and England in science. With you, men fly and travel with incredible swiftness in steamboats and railways, which we have never seen. I much wonder what a railroad is like.”

“A railroad is a level tract cut through whatever uneven ground may come in the way. Sometimes it runs in a

A Traveller's Tale

trench dug fifty or sixty feet deep in a hill ; sometimes it goes across a valley on arches as high as the Alhambra stands above Granada ; sometimes it plunges through the stony heart of a mountain, and comes out, after a league of darkness underground. It is laid with continuous bars of iron, on which the wheels fit, so that whatever pace it goes the carriages cannot run off the road."

"But in what sort of a carriage do they travel on these iron roads ?"

"There is a long string of forty or fifty carriages, each four or five times as big as a *diligencia*. It looks like a gigantic caterpillar, with a hundred wheels instead of legs. It has a great iron head like a dragon, containing the engine, which pulls the whole line, and snorts great clouds of steam from its nostrils, and breathes flame, and drops bright burning coals from its fiery mouth. You hear a great panting sound like a giant out of breath afar off. You see a square spot in the distance, which grows rapidly bigger and bigger in your eye as it comes puff—puff—puffing. In a moment it is here with a crashing noise ; and the next moment it has passed you as quick as a swallow on the wing, and is rumbling and puffing away in the distance at the other side. They can go five-and-twenty leagues in an hour, though they seldom do, for such a speed would wear the carriages out too quickly ; and, indeed, it is almost enough to rattle them to pieces."

In this discourse we passed a small shed, too wretched to be called a *venta*, though they sold wine there. As it was a hot and thirsty day, I called for a *real's* worth of wine, and they brought us about a quart, which we drank, and went on.

He said they had given us less than our money's worth. I said I had asked for a *real's* worth, and as long as they

Bridges and Women

gave us what we wanted to drink, I was indifferent what the regular price might be.

“Oh!” said he, “if you have more money than you want, you might give it away to more deserving men than those rogues the *venteros*, who rob many more honest men in their time than do the regular bandits of the highway. But one ought not to be too hard upon them, poor fellows; they live in constant temptation to be rogues, and their conscience gets as much trodden under foot and worn away as the stone step at their threshold.”

We passed a bridge with a very high pointed arch, which he said he had always admired as peculiarly graceful. “Yes,” we replied, “but it is not so convenient as a flatter one; for you have to go up and down a very steep hill on either side.”

“Beauty and convenience,” he rejoined, “are seldom compatible. In that respect a bridge resembles a woman; all are dangerous, and the beautiful are less convenient and useful than the plain; but, still, without a bridge and a woman, you cannot pass your river or your life; unless you ford the one wet-shod, or pass the other uncomfortably as a bachelor.”

As he talked and walked away at a great pace, the day growing hotter and hotter, he got out of breath; and as we had to reach the Venta de Cegri, which was, for us, a good day's journey from Granada; and we had been going slower than usual, for the sake of Mr. Vigil's company, we now thanked him for the same, and said we must pass on, and we hoped he would overtake us where we should stop to bait. He thanked us for our *cortesía y filantropía* (courtesy and philanthropy), and bid us go with God.

It is striking to us, who are accustomed to connect the use of complicated Latinised words with a studious classical

The Revolver

education, to hear them flow naturally from the mouth of a peasant ; but to the Spaniard, the Latin is what the Saxon in our language is to our own peasantry—the ground-work of his language, and the pabulum from which all his most homely and household words are fashioned ; whereas the Latin element with us is an after-polish, glazed on by education.

We now trotted forward, and shortly reached a *venta*, where some clumsy carts and oxen were standing before the gateway. Entering, we put up our ponies. The host took very little notice of us—a lazy varlet, smoking the *cigarillo* of tranquility in the sun ; we could hardly persuade him to get us out the barley we asked for. He shortly began to eat a hunch of bread, with a slice of raw ham laid on it ; and we, being very hungry, and finding there was nothing better to be had, got some too. It rather went against my stomach, but Harry said the salting was nearly the same thing as cooking, and he had eaten a great deal of raw ham on the plains in America.

Afterwards, as we sat smoking, it occurred to us to fire off our pistols, to see if they would go off, and to charge again, so that robbers should find us in an efficiently explosive state of preparation, in case they came, though we have now almost given up all hopes of having any more adventures of that kind.

A considerable number of men were attracted to the spot by the report of our pistols, which we fired at the swallows on the rafters of the shed beneath which we were sitting. They (not the swallows) were particularly struck with the revolver, and one of them said,—

“*Carajo*, it is already evident that it would be a bad speculation to rob these men” ; showing plainly that his sympathies were all on the side of the thieves, whose fatal

A Short Cut

mistake, in case they attempted such a thing, they seemed cordially to commiserate. I fired the six barrels in rapid succession, saying, "Un ladron—dos ladrones—tres ladrones—cuatro ladrones—cinco ladrones—seis ladrones—y el capitan,"¹ finally discharging the large-muzzled, single-barrelled pistol of Harry's, which I also carried in my *faja*, his three others being as much as he could conveniently do with.

We now rode on, and coming to another *venta*, found our friend Vigil finishing his dinner. He came along with us, limping a little, for he was getting foot-sore. Our ponies were rather tired, and we got off and led them. I felt that to the poor, weary, foot-sore man it must seem unreasonable that ponies should go with empty backs; however, I could not afford to make the Moor, with his still doubtful remains of a sore shoulder, do more work than I myself required, and so I compromised the matter with my conscience, by offering to carry his cloak, which relieved him considerably, without sensibly affecting the Moor.

Towards the end of our day's work, when we were all very weary, with the advice and sanction of Vigil—who had been this road before, though long ago—we took one of those short cuts which profess to slice something off across an angle of the road, but which generally more than balance the account by steepness and roughness. This one fully came up to the usual short-cut character; and after climbing up a ladder of rocks, we found that our wretched bad road was diverging away over the hill from the right direction, and never likely to meet the *camino real* more. At right angles to our present direction appeared a large square white building in the valley below; and as no part of the hill-side was, or could well be, more rocky than this by-path,

¹ One robber—two robbers, &c., and the captain.

Venta de Cegri

we left it, and performing a slow steeple-chase across the country, reached the Venta de Cegri.

Before the gateway a number of women and children and soldiers were scattered in picturesque groups; the women sewing, peeling potatoes, or picking lettuces for salad. The *carabineros* (who have a station here) were loitering about, talking to the women, or playing with the children. They were all gathered there to take the last out of the warmth and light of the sun, which was fast sloping to the western hills. We unsaddled our beasts. Vigil gave a favourable professional opinion of the Moor's shoulder, which he said was quite well and healed up, without likelihood of relapse. Coming out to take our share of the sunset, innumerable mules and *arrieros* kept arriving, and there was a great bustle. A man brought a donkey, whose ample panniers were piled with lettuces, and I purchased three at a *cuarto* each (three *cuartos* are about a penny), and gave them to a daughter of the house, to pick for salad.

The *ventero* now came up, and asked us, "Would we be pleased to sup? There were some partridges and rabbits in the *olla*." This was a great windfall: but we were now travelling on a great road, where the *ventas* are on a larger scale, and can make preparations for the chance comers of the evening, with more probability of customers turning up to pay for the stew. We had some rice fried in oil to eat with the *olla*, which, with our salad, made an excellent supper. We invited Vigil. He was off his feed, however, and could only be persuaded to eat some bread and salad, and drink a little wine.

It was now a question where to sleep. All the dwelling-rooms in the upper story of the *venta* were occupied by the company of *carabineros*. We therefore disposed ourselves

Puerto de Arenas

on the stone benches which surround the chimney-corner, arranging our saddles and *alforjas* for pillows, and wrapping our "martial cloaks around us."

"Who sleep on couches hard are up betimes."

When the dawn looked in upon the smouldering ashes of the hearth, we arose, shook ourselves, fed our ponies, and departed. About five miles on the road we stopped to breakfast. While the ponies were feeding, I sat on the village fountain, smoking in the sun. Here Vigil came for a drink as he was passing. I asked him to go into our *posada*, which was just opposite the fountain, and have a cup of chocolate, which he accepted. Here we took leave of him for good, and he thanked us for our *caballeresque* conduct and benevolence towards him.

The valley along which the road ran, shortly after this began to straiten, till it came at last to so narrow a gorge between lofty precipitous crags, that there was not room for both the stream and the way. The latter was tunnelled through the rock. The day was very hot, and the breeze blowing through the cool cavern was delicious. Emerging at the other end, the clear stream, gurgling among its rocky basins, reminded us that we might at least wash our hands and faces here for the first time to-day.

"The place seems made for the purpose!"

"No doubt, and specially for us."

"Well, let this be my washhand-stand, and that yours" (pointing to the two gigantic precipices on either side of the stream). Having relieved ourselves of this little burst of the enthusiastic egotism which belongs to travellers, we washed our hands and faces at the *Puerto de Arenas*.

My Cloak

Know, people of all climes and races,
Who pass the "gate of sands,"
That in the stream, which laves the bases
Of these tall rocks, we washed our faces,
And likewise washed our hands.

Signed, { H. I. C.
 { G. I. C.

P.S.—We therefore take our solemn dick,
These are the rocks of Hic and Gic.

This inscription was *not* carved on the face of the free-stone in letters a foot high and three inches deep ; because, though cherishing that reverential desire to perpetuate the initial letters of our names in lasting materials which is one of the noblest features of a travelling Briton's character, we could not afford to sacrifice a day even to so memorable an occasion.

An hour or two after, a *diligence* appeared behind us, and we drew up to let it pass. They suddenly quickened their pace, and galloped past us at full speed. Perhaps they took us for thieves ; at any rate it suggested the idea to us—What, if we should rob them ? They would certainly give up their money ; but the question was how we should escape afterwards. Ourselves we could disguise, by changing our Andalusian dress for shooting-jackets and trousers ; but our ponies—could we arrange our cloaks and *mantas* so as to alter their appearance ? Here I looked round for my cloak, which I had rolled up in my little *manta* and tied with tape to the tin loops behind the saddle. But the loops, which were rather rough, had cut the tape, and the cloak was gone. This time it did not seem worth while to go back for it, as we had already made a long day's work, and a league and a half yet remained to Jaen. Besides, the cloak was not worth much, and very heavy ; and I still had my Scotch plaid to keep the rain off, which would be enough, unless

Sadly Disturbed

we had to sleep without beds again. I was therefore thankful not to have lost it the day before, for I should have been wretchedly off without it last night on the stone bench. I now understood its evident predisposition to get lost the day before at the Arco de Media Legua. I have often observed, that when a thing is about to be shortly lost altogether, it loosens itself gradually from your possession by several previous delinquencies. So I made up my mind to buy a better one in Madrid.

Since the Puerto de Arenas, the ravine had widened into a valley again, and the stream to a strong torrent. Jaen stands where the valley opens out, among ragged spurs of the mountains, upon the plain. On one of these stands the Moorish castle of Jaen, with ruined fortifications following the ridge in zig-zags down to the city.

We crossed the river, and rode up into the town. Near the gate was the *Posada del Santo Rostro*. Here we supped, and I went to sleep at once in my clothes, lying on my bed. In the middle of the night, or rather about three o'clock in the morning, I woke up, severely bitten by bugs. I heard a clattering of horses below. The last thing on one's mind over-night will strike one the first thing in the morning. I suppose I had some drowsy consciousness that I ought to have unsaddled the Moor before going to bed, and that the clattering might be some unscrupulous muleteer departing early to get away unobserved with my saddle. Going downstairs, I found it was only an *arriero* leading his mules to drink at a clear broad trough of running water, near the entrance of the *posada*. The gate however was shut, and nobody appeared to have departed yet.

I now made an excursion through about sixty or seventy yards of stabling, edging my way between the tails of two long rows of mules, standing as close together as they could

False Alarm

be packed. The Moor was lying like a dead horse, with his head down and his legs stretched out; but he had no saddle on. This looked bad, and I went to see if the *mozo de la cuadra* was anywhere to be found. In the space near the entrance and fireplace, the floor was covered with muleteers lying on the ground, with a *manta* beneath and a *capa* to cover them.

I could find no *mozo* moving about, nor did I remember his face, so as to wake up the right man among the sleepers. At last, the man who had been watering his mules came to lie down. I asked him what the *mozo's* name was, and on his authority went about crying—"Alfonzóóóóóó!" At length, out of a sort of dust-hole closet near the corn-bin, came a man, rubbing his eyes. I told him my grievance, and we went together and inspected all the premises with no success. At last he suggested that it might be in my room. I said I thought not, for I had left it on, and gone to sleep without taking it to a place of safety. However, when we came upstairs with a lamp, there it was in the ante-room of our chamber, where Harry, seeing me fast asleep, had deposited it. I was rather ashamed at the trouble I had caused, and gave the *mozo* a cigar, by way of a sop. He went away quite satisfied, nor the least vexed at his rest being broken on an emergency which ended in smoke. As I was now thoroughly awake, and had no desire to go to sleep again, I lit the lamp, and got my inkstand and blotting-book out of the *alforjas*. My lamp has just burned out for want of oil, and I finish this by daylight, which has luckily supervened. I had slept from about eight to three in the morning, which is seven hours. It is now time to wake Harry up, and go and feed the ponies.

There, I have given them a *medio* apiece, and they are munching away heartily. Harry is dressing, and grumbles

Bug Tortures

considerably about being bitten. It appears they attacked him during the early part of the night, so that he could not get to sleep ; and that when they took pity on him, they came over to me, and waked me up. However, you are obliged to them and the saddle, and the *arriero* watering his mules, for this chapter.

The *moza* (chamber-maid) is bringing our two *jicaras* of chocolate, so I must clear the table.

CHAPTER XXII

LA MANCHA, *April 7.*

LEAVING Jaen by the great Madrid road, we followed the same for about a league, and then turned off to the right, taking a by-path for Torre Quebradilla.

In sight of this pretty village, we halted by the border of a barley-field ; Harry, to sketch the place, and I—as my forte does not lie in landscape—to draw the Cid and his master. They formed a picturesque group ; Harry sitting cross-legged on the grassy bank, and the Cid, his bridle looped round the artist's knee, nibbling the herbage.

The impatient little jerks of the rein, when the latter strained towards some tempting tuft just beyond his reach, were shortly found so detrimental to the artistic process, that the Cid was turned adrift ; and I followed this example with the equally troublesome Moor.

Our steeds, being now free to adopt a diet of their own choosing, began to show a decided preference for the tender green barley, into which they unceremoniously waded knee-deep. We were soon interrupted in finishing our sketches by an indignant protest from the owner of the barley-field, who came up in breathless wrath, anathematising both the animals and ourselves. We begged him to *disimular* (excuse) our indiscretion, caught our marauders, and entered the village.

At the *posada*, where we stopped to breakfast, the unso-

Picturesque Rock

phisticated inhabitants gathered to look at the unaccustomed sight of foreigners. Our arms, and especially the revolver, astonished and delighted them. "They had heard England was the most wonderful country in the world. In Biscay, indeed, were made arms—terrible weapons; but nothing so astute as this." They were almost equally astonished at our drawings; and were altogether charmingly fresh and innocent, after the callous, indifferent folks of the main road.

On our way down the other side of the rounded hill, after leaving Torre Quebradilla, a bold isolated crag pierced the soil on our right. It was a mere trifle, not more than forty or fifty yards high, but pretty, with much breadth of massive shade, and gracefully plumed with shrubs.

"How this would draw picnics in a county where rocks are not plentiful!—say Lincolnshire."

"Yes, truly, a picnic is a choice thought in this hungry land."

Here, in the grassy hollow, would be spread
The snowy cloth—dimpled with various viands.
Ah! cleanly damask of our native land!
Ah! pleasant memory of pigeon-pie,
Short-crusted—savoury-jellied—floury-yolked!
Ah! fair white-bosomed fowl with tawny tongue
Well married! lobster-salad, crisp and cool,
With polished silver from clean crockery
Forked up—washed down with drinks that make me now
Thirsty to think of.

Yes, with ginger-pop
These crags should echo.

Ah! rare golden gleam
Of sack in silver goblets gilt within!—
Bright evanescent raptures of champagne—
Brisk bottled stout in pewters creamy crowned!

Blank Reminiscences

And here should sit, 'neath gay-fringed parasols,
Fair creatures with blue eyes and golden curls
(Not drenched with scents as foreign ladies are),
Smelling of kid gloves and Eau de Cologne.
Shiny black-belted youths, in braided caps
And braided blue frock-coats, should wait on them,
Making substantial laughter and slight jests—
Heroes undress from the next garrison,
With much-Macassared ringlets auburn-hued,
And corkscrew-twirled moustache of brighter red—
Arch conquerors of hearts in county towns.

And the repast now ended—Cornet Phibbs
Would bear the camp-stool to yon mossy mound—
Would spread the sketch-book, and the tumbler fill
(For Cornet Phibbs is quite the ladies' man);
While sweet Miss Flora Fubbs, with much ado,
Seating herself in graceful attitude,
And choosing paint-brushes and mixing paints,
Declares she always makes a wretched daub
When people stand and watch her as she draws.

But Cornet Phibbs replies—"It is too bad!
'Pon honour, 'tis too bad. Gweat artists like
To make a mystewy and monopoly,
Hiding the secwets of their art. Now I
Thought I should get a wrinkle watching you.
You didn't know I dwew?—I learnt at school."

"Perhaps you only learnt to draw your sword."

"Why, that I can, of course—and also corks—
And covers—haw!—haw!—haw! But what I mean,
Fortification—haw!—in Indian ink,
That sort of thing—and though I dwaw it mild—
Yet that—haw!—haw!—that may be called my *forte*."

"Oh fie! for shame! where do you think you'll go
For making such a heap of foolish puns?"

"Why to the Punjaub I should think—haw!—haw!
That sort of job you know would suit me best."

We knew we must soon pass Guadalquivir, which would here meet us for the first time since leaving Seville, and probably for the last time in our lives. We expected his

Guadalquivir

appearance with impatience, as it were the face of an old friend ; and, at length, we heard the rushing of waters, which we figured to ourselves a clear trout-stream rippling among rocks.

“Hail ! infant prince of Andalusian rivers, which (since we left thy royal court on Seville’s strand, deep-ranged with fairy palaces) hast younger grown, while we wax stale upon our toilsome way. We heard the nursery-babblings of thy youth, and deemed that here, not far remote from thy mountain cradle, we might behold thee clear and unpolluted yet, with that rich wealth of mud which, lower down, thou takest as tribute from thine alluvial dominions. We find thee turbid in thy youth, as in thine after-age ; rolling foul ripples of a livid red, as ’twere pink madder mixed with Vandyk brown !

“Flow on, unworthy heir of noble destinies ! for thou shalt pass by glorious Cordova—eloquent Cordova ; the gem of the South ; the flower of science and of valour ; the birth-place of Lucan and the Senecas ; the city of the great captain. Thou shalt wash the Moorish piers of *Sevilla la Maravilla*, and shalt mix thy mud at last with the blue Mediterranean !”

I shouldn’t wonder if my reader was a little tired of rhapsodies. Come, now, we will hatch a little adventure expressly for your amusement.

Riding down the curious sloping bridge, whose graduated arches connect the high bank of the river with the low one, we saw, about half a mile ahead, a knot of people moving on the road.

“It is about time for another batch of robbers,” I said ; “and if these be thieves, how many are we a match for ?”

“We may reckon ourselves a match for four Spaniards, or two Englishmen,” replied Harry, “and no more ; let us be moderate.”

How Many are we a Match For ?

“I think that *is* rather too moderate, considering our far more than ordinary supply of arms, our valour, and extreme readiness to fight. Life is a lottery, and so is literature, and it's great odds we shouldn't both of us be killed ; and if one of us really was killed, it would make the fortune of our joint work, half of which would have to be posthumous. It would give such reality to the incident, to have read in the newspapers about the banditti killing one of the authors named in the title-page.”

“ Good Heavens, how shocking ! What do you think — would say, if she heard you talk in that careless way about an event which——”

“ She would say I was an unfeeling wretch. But talking about it doesn't make me any more likely to be killed ; and one can't pick this rose, Adventure, without our fingers coming near that thorn, Danger. Of course, it would be very shocking, and all that. But I have no sort of expectation of its happening. Moreover, I think you underrate what we could do with all these pistols. We are more than a match for two average Englishmen. For instance ; we overtake these three men on their lazy mules—we shall soon reach them. Ha ! by their dress, they are not Spaniards ! They are two travelling Englishmen, with a Spanish servant. Look !—by Jove, they have both of them silver spectacles astride of their pug noses. They are clergymen just presented with livings, seeing a little of the world through glasses before they settle. Have at them ! These men shall never show fight ; I warrant you they will have a bag of dollars apiece to give to robbers, as nervous old ladies sometimes carry sugar-plums, to keep children quiet. Have at them, say I ; it is a pity they should carry their money-bags for nothing, and it is as well it shouldn't go out of the family—nation, I mean. Of course, you say

Cheaper to Rob than to be Robbed

it is ridiculous—so is the beginning of every adventure. But having stepped upon that rolling rail Imprudence, you slip over head and ears into this river Necessity, and then Prudence shall bid you swim as best you can, to get yourself out. It is the first step only! Come, we want robbers in this part of our work, and it is both cheaper and more convenient to rob than to be robbed!”

Hereupon we ride up—pull out our pistols, and are about to cry “*Abajo! bocca a tierra!*”¹ with voices of thunder, when we discover them to be neither bandits nor pug-nosed parsons, but cutlers of Albacete returning from Jaen, where they had been selling their wares. I bought a poniard of them for a dollar and a half. The *puñales* of Albacete are famous: long, narrow-pointed, murderous weapons, not opening like a Sevillian *navaja*, but sheathed as a dagger.

When we had passed them, we fell to discoursing upon imagination, and the degree with which fancy may be brought to resemble fact. As an instance of wonderful power in this way, we lit upon Don Quixote’s meeting with the barber on his ass. First he sees something shining bright, like gold, in the distance, on the top of a horseman’s head. The reader wonders what strange and incredible thing is to appear. It turns out to be a barber, returning on his ass from a neighbouring village, where there was no resident member of his profession, and he had put his basin over his hat, which was a new one, because it was raining slightly.

The reader being satisfied with this circumstantial solution of the apparent improbability, and knowing Don Quixote’s peculiar insanity, and his previous difficulties with the pasteboard substitute, is quite prepared for the

¹ “Down! mouth to the ground!”

Mambrino's Helmet

delusion of Mambrino's helmet. The scene being thus in action, the continuation is easy enough. The barber runs away ; Don Quixote rejoices over the helmet ; and Sancho, with his practical eye to solid advantages, exchanges his ass's shabby harness for that of the barber.

The difficulty and the triumph of invention was to get the copper shaving-dish reasonably on the barber's head ; or rather to hit upon the incident of a barber so peculiarly helmed. This appears to me to be so difficult a thing to have imagined, that I should prefer the supposition that Cervantes had actually seen some barber with his basin on his head to keep his new hat from the rain ; and being struck with some vague similitude of a helmet, his imagination fell to shaping circumstances in which such an incident could be employed. As it must have been an imaginative lunatic, full of strange ideas of knight-errantry, who could be fairly carried away by a belief in its being really a helmet, it is possible that hence may have arisen the very idea of a Don Quixote. Indeed, this apparently very random theory is strengthened by the fact that on Don Quixote's first appearance, his very earliest difficulty is with the imperfect *celada*, which was just defective in that part (the *morion*, I think) which the shaving-dish was destined to supply. In imaginative minds there is no telling how small a matter may be the nucleus round which materials gather, that again suggest other and larger matters, so that the original idea often becomes merely an episode in the complete result.

As we were ascending the long hill which rises from the river up to the town, the sun went down over Jaen, and the red sunset, slanting along the wide valley, lit up the broad craggy shoulders of the mountain-range facing Baeza to the south. Along the darkening plain a few winding

Our North-East Passage

reaches still caught the golden sky ; and so we saw the last of Guadalquivir.

Baeza, not very remarkable as you approach, is a curious place inside. There is a vast circular *plaza* surrounded by columns and arches. Lighted up at night by lamps in the windows, with groups sauntering about in the broad dark space, it struck us as a singular town, unlike anything we had yet seen. We found the *Posada de los Fardines*, where we supped on asparagus-omelette and salad. The asparagus-omelette is made by frying the ends of the shoots in oil ; and, when they are done enough, the broken eggs are poured into the frying-pan, and the whole mess stirred up. The pan is not set on again, being hot enough to cook the eggs without further application to the fire. A good omelette is founded in the same manner on crisp fried potatoes.

Up at five next morning, and set off in a mizzling rain. Not having made sufficiently particular inquiries, we of course went wrong ; and as we were busy talking, we got within a mile of Uveda before we found it out. An old man and his son arrived as we stood pondering on our difficulty. He answered our questions about Arquillos civilly enough ; but when we began to consider whether we could not rectify our error now, by going to Vilche and get into our route further on than Arquillos, the old man lost his patience.

“Vilche, my good sirs, is by no means in the way to Arquillos.”

“That is indifferent to us : we desire to go in a north-east direction, and shall be obliged if you will tell us whether this by-path here, leaving the road, will take us in that line ? ” This was too metaphysical an abstraction for him, and he turned to his son :

The Moor puts his Foot in it

“Come along, my son, since it is evident that these *caballeros* neither know their way, nor where they wish to go,—let us continue our day’s work !”

So we took the by-path, which proved very circuitous and stony, winding among vineyards and olive-groves along the brow of a hill, till it descended to El Marmol,[†] in the valley. This, so far from being a city of marble palaces, as its name would suggest, was a miserable little village, which had no *posada*. We managed, however, to purchase some barley at a private house, and stood in the porch while our beasts picked a little of the corn out of the flat matting basket. They were neither of them hungry, and the Moor was pertinaciously determined to put his foot in it instead of his nose, and would snuff, and nibble, and twitch at the rim of the basket ; and if by any accident he did get a mouthful of corn, he was sure to lift up his head out of the extempore manger, and scatter most of it in the street. As it was raining, and we were stopping merely for their advantage, you may be sure we gave our refractory beasts several severe reprimands ; but to no purpose ; we could not persuade them to be hungry, nor inform them they would not have another chance till evening.

Here they told us that Vilche was out of our way, and that Las Navas was the shortest cut to San Esteban, where we proposed to sleep. On our way along this weary cross-country road we overtook a farmer, who seemed suspicious of us at first ; but was reassured of our respectability on hearing we were Englishmen. He said he wondered we were not afraid to travel alone in a strange country. We asked him what there was to be afraid of, telling him we had ten pistol-barrels between us. We had not made this

[†] Written El Marnal in the map, but called El Marmol by the people.

Red River

boast long, when Harry discovered that he had lost one of his long pistols out of his *faja*.

This was on the bank of the brickdust-coloured Guadaluhmar (*Arabicè* red river), near a wooden cross set up to the memory of a murdered man. We turned back as far as the bridge over the river, which we had crossed about a mile before, and met some muleteers. We suspected by their manner that they had found it, though they stoutly denied it.

I was for searching them by main force; but Harry thought it better to bribe them; so he offered half an ounce of gold to any well-disposed person who would bring it to us at San Esteban, if it was found by anybody they met during the day. It has not yet appeared, and I fear there is little chance. I wish we had searched the men, which would have been easily done.

On to Las Navas—small *venta*; a little further two roads diverge at a well: here our ponies drank, and we went to the right, the narrower track of the two. It led along a broad valley. A sharp shower overtook us, and we begged for shelter at a *cortijo* or farm-house.

When the *chaparron* had blown over, a Valencian lad, from the *Venta San Esteban*, who had come on a message from the *ventero* to his uncle (the farmer with whom we had taken refuge), undertook to accompany us to our destination. This was lucky, as the night came on very dark, and the way lay across a stony, sloppy wilderness, through which it would have been extremely difficult to see any way at all, without guidance, by that light, or rather darkness.

We reached the *venta*, not before we were very tired; and as we had dined at Las Navas, and were not hungry for supper, we made some *aguardiente* egg-flip in a great

Making Game of Travellers

glass mug with a handle, holding more than a quart. The flip was not good, for want of sugar : there was none in the house. There were no beds either, and we had to sleep on two wretched narrow mattresses, or broad bolsters (bags stuffed with straw and fleas), in the immediate vicinity of the horses. Indeed they were only walled off by a low partition ; and we could hear the Cid and Moor munching their barley over our heads till we fell asleep.

We had requested to sleep in the straw-loft, but our host absolutely refused, saying that "St. John the Baptist himself should not go up into his *pajar*."

Next morning we were up betimes, and made our first stage to Montizon. The country hereabouts changes from broad cultivated valleys to the rolling hills of the *dehesa*. Riding over one of these, we heard numerous voices in the brushwood—a partridge got up—bang—no effect—bang—this time the bird fell. We stopped a little while to see the sport, and shortly about twenty men armed with muskets came out upon the road. We were a little afraid they might think it came well into their day's work to do a stroke of business in the way of traveller-shooting. However, deeming it better not to seem to entertain the possibility, we rode up to the party, and in a patronising manner asked to see the contents of the bag, as we might prove purchasers. There was only one rabbit besides the partridge we had just seen slain ; but that was enough for our dinner, so we bought them, and strung them on the iron rings of our respective halters.

On reaching Venta Quemada, we had our rabbit and partridge hacked up and fried in oil ; and it was very good and tender, not having had time to cool.

There was a man smoking a pipe, a very rare thing in these parts, where the paper cigar is almost universal. This

A Calumet

pipe was made seven years ago. He had cut the bowl out of a soft black stone, and the stem was a twig from the *dehesa*, with the pith pushed out. This pipe at once struck my fancy. It had a quaint barbarian character, and looked something like one of the Red Indians' calumets on a small scale.

Harry was smoking a filthy white halfpenny clay, bought at Gibraltar. I saw, by the man's looking at it, that he thought Harry's the best of the two, and I said I had one of that sort which I would swop with him. He jumped at the idea, and I got mine out of the *alforjas*, where it was carefully stowed as a *corps de réserve*, in case I broke my own faithful black clay, which has served a year or more.

The man, seeing what a number of old gloves stiffened with cards it came out of, conceived my halfpenny pipe must be an object of great value, and evidently thought he had taken advantage of my simplicity. But after all, perhaps he did take me in. We value what is rare to us. To him the civilised pipe was a rarity, to me the barbarian; and if civilisation be the better state of the two, of course he had the best of it. But then his pipe was unique—made by hand, with much labour; the other, turned out of a mould which had fashioned fifty thousand.

Riding on among the winding hills, a theory was started to show why mountain scenery was more popular than dead levels. We agreed that, more than superior beauty, rapid change, and the uncertainty of what you are coming to, make the reputation of mountains. Looking over a long plain, and seeing all the towns and towers you can reach in a day or two, is a limited species of foreknowledge, which is too much for humanity. If we had the gift of prophecy, life would be a dead level. That beautiful and accomplished

Foreknowledge Makes Life Plain

young lady, Miss Amusement, derives her origin from old Grandfather Doubt and old Grandmother Curiosity.

Amusement is the business of foolish men—to them everything is uncertainty, and the smallest trifles exciting. The wise man, who sees much further before his nose, is not so easily amused: he requires to be engaged in deeper and more perplexing matters, in order to obtain that anxiety which is necessary to the enjoyment of life.

But though the fool is more easily amused, he is also more easily impatient. To see your way before you, shortens your way. Uncertainty gives excitement—foreknowledge patience.

Descending from the hills into a broad green *vega*, we crossed a rapid, red, muddy stream, which divides Andalusia from La Mancha. Crossing it, we saw a great castle not far off to the left. A little further on, turning round for another view of it, it was gone, and there was no apparent reason in the lying of the land; and I immediately decided it was an enchanted castle, and I said I would invent a legend for it. Round about this *vega* there seem a good many castles.

A little after sunset we rode into La Torre, a straggling village, which, however, had a decent *posada*. Here we found a knife-grinder, who put an edge on our daggers, which are rather blunted with cutting Cavendish for our pipes. The host, seeing our pistols, was astonished; and as he of course told everybody, we soon had a *levée* of all the magnates of the place. They agreed my revolver was "*una cosa muy linda y digna de verse*" (a thing very beautiful and worthy to be seen); and the *alcalde*, seeing the name of Palmerston on our passports, fell into the usual raptures over that great and terrible signature. There is no European reputation like his. He is the ever-wakeful Jupiter of diplomacy,

Palmerston Tonans

ready to hurl a neat and effective packet of thunder, tied up with lightning-coloured tape, from his Olympus in Downing-street, on anybody rash enough to ill-use a British subject, and he deserves and possesses the filial reverence of all young gentlemen on their travels, for his paternal care and affection.

To return to the village of La Torre. The authorities, seeing we had such magnificent passports, asked if we belonged to the Embassy at Madrid. This was a severe blow to our muleteer disguise.

CHAPTER XXIII

VILLARTA, *April 12.*

ON leaving La Torre, our road lay through Cozar, and then across a plain covered with young wheat. Towards noon we reached Cubillas, a very ruinous village. Entering it, we asked our way to the *posada*; and as we went on, we heard one of the persons we had asked say to the other, "There go two Andaluzes." This is the first time we have been taken for Spaniards after opening our mouths. Here we baited, and ordered a potato-omelette. In cooking it, the old *posadera*, not having sufficient nerve to toss the omelette (a dexterous manœuvre, by which it performs a somersault in the air and lights in the frying-pan the other way up), appealed to her daughter.

This young lady, who was one of the most beautiful women we have seen in the Peninsula, set down the tambour-frame, on which she was embroidering some fine linen, rose with that majestic and queenly air which the supremacy of loveliness seldom fails to give a woman of whatever rank, and tossed it quite in a manner to give one an appetite. She had a fine figure, rather tall; delicately regular features, large dark-fringed eyes, and a splendid mass of hair looped up in glossy folds behind her neck.

Both Harry and myself fell in love at first sight. We ate our luncheon, and then I seated myself beside her in the chimney-corner.

The Wedding Pillow-case

By way of opening the conversation with an interesting topic, I asked her when she was to be married? She, instead of, as I supposed she would, entirely denying all thought or intention of such an undertaking, simply answered, "In August."

"And so you are embroidering lilies and roses on the wedding-sheets?" I continued.

"On the pillow," said she.

"How long was the courtship?" said I.

"Two years," said she.

"And how old is the *novio*?" (sweetheart), said I.

"Twenty-two," said she.

"And you?" said I.

"Nineteen," said she.

"It sounds like a discreet preparation for happiness, and I hope your pillow may be strewed with real roses and lilies," said I.

"I thank your worship," said she; and so we mounted and rode away.

After crossing a league or two more of the plain, we were within about the same distance of a range of hills, when the road disappeared in the midst of a wheat-field. Here it was very heavy riding, and, to make it worse, rain came on. Good fortune at last brought us to another road, by which we got to El-Christo de la Valle, whose minaret-like towers and steeples rise in a narrow cleft through the range of hills.

Riding into the town with my long brown Scotch plaid hanging nearly to the ground on either side, with the front corners knotted over the Moor's mane, so that I dare say he looked very like a hobby-horse at Astley's, the children of the place, who probably had never seen so strange a figure, shouted and laughed with such enthusiasm, that we were glad to take shelter in a *posada*.

Malo Paño

When we had dried ourselves at a blazing fire, and eaten a salad, we rode over three more weary leagues of plain to Manzanares. Our beasts got very tired, and so did I; for the dangling plaid, heavy with rain, dragged my shoulders. We must have ridden rather more than thirty miles to-day. I went to sleep by the kitchen-fire, and was waked by Harry, to eat very tough chicken for supper.

Next day, Good Friday, we gave our ponies a half-holiday, and at three o'clock were just starting for the *Venta Quesada*, intending to sleep there. You are, or should be aware, that this is *THE venta* of Don Quixote. Here he arrived on the evening of his first sally, was knighted, and performed the vigil, watching his armour over the well-trough.

Our host of the *Posada del Carillo*, who was standing at the folding-gates of his courtyard to see us off, happened to ask where we intended to sleep, and we told him.

"That is a bad place to sleep, *Señores*. The *venta* is a miserable hut, and the people of the house are *malo paño* (bad cloth). There are no beds there."

"We had heard it was a large *venta*, *Señor huesped*; is it not a very ancient *venta*?"

"Oh, no, *Senores*; it is only a wretched hovel, to supply a station of *carabineros* with *aguardiente*. There was once a great and commodious *venta* there, but that was burnt down in the war time."

"Was that an old building?"

"Oh, yes! a *cosa de siempre* (thing of always). There is nothing left of it but the well, and a great stone trough."

As we had no intention of passing the night watching a row of pistols and daggers on the edge of the well-trough, this information altered our plans. We decided now to

Argamasilla del Alba

turn towards Argamasilla del Alba, where the first part of Don Quixote was written in prison. The church-tower of this celebrated place soon appeared ; but we found the road much longer than it seemed ; for distances on the dead levels of La Mancha, with a clear atmosphere, are very deceptive.

It was half an hour after sunset as we entered Argamasilla. While our hostess of the *Posada de la Mina* was preparing our supper, we inquired if she had ever heard of Miguel Cervantes, who had lived in the *carcel* (prison).

“No, *Señores*. I think I have heard of one Cervantes, but he does not live here at present.”

“Do you know anything of Don Quixote ?”

“Oh, yes ; he was a great *caballero*, who lived in the *pueblo* (township) some years ago. His house is over the way, on the other side of the *plaza*, with the arms over the door. The father of the *alcalde* is the oldest man in the place, and perhaps he may remember him.”

This was encouraging. The author, indeed, was forgotten ; but the hero of his novel had become a real man, whose house remained to testify of him to this day.

While we were undressing to go to bed, three gentlemen were announced and shown in. We begged them to be seated, and they were so, on three chairs at the end of the room ; and we sat opposite, at the feet of our respective beds, to hear what they might have to communicate. A venerable old man opened the conference :

“We have understood, gentlemen, that you have come hither, seeking for information respecting the famous Don Quixote, and we have come to give you such information as we may ; but perhaps you will understand me better if I speak in Latin.”

“We have learnt the Latin at school, but are more accustomed to converse in the Castilian ; pray proceed.”

The Deputation

“I am the *medico* of the place—an old man, as you see—and what little I know has reached me by tradition. It is reported that Cervantes was paying his addresses to a young lady, niece of the then *alcalde*, whose name was Quijana, or Quijada. The *alcalde*, disapproving of the suit, put him into a dungeon under his house, and kept him there a year. Once he escaped and fled, but he was taken in 'Toboso and brought back. Cervantes wrote 'Don Quixote' as a satire on the *alcalde*, who was a very proud man, full of chivalresque ideas. You can see the dungeon to-morrow; but you should also see the *batanes* (water-mills) of the Guadiana, whose (*golpear*) clapping so terrified Sancho Panza. They are at about three leagues' distance. Going a little further, you will see a powder-mill, and will be astonished at the water-power. Ah! in your country these things would be fructified, but here we take advantage of nothing. My house is at your disposition, *Señores*. We are proud to receive, with all courtesy, strangers who come here, doing honour to the memory of our illustrious townsman. If you will favour my house to-morrow, at five o'clock, on your return from the *batanes*, it will give me great pleasure to conduct you to the house of Quijana, and the dungeon where Cervantes wrote.”

They departed, and we went to bed.

Next morning we were up early, and leaving our *alforjas* behind, cantered away much more lightly than usual. After about a league and a half, we got to a slight dip, which gradually deepened into a shallowish valley. Passing a ruinous Moorish castle on the left (which, by the way, I wonder Cervantes made no use of), we came at last to the mills. These clumsy ancient machines are composed of a couple of huge wooden mallets, slung in a timber framework, which, being pushed out of the perpendicular by

Los Batanes

knobs on a water-wheel, clash back again alternately in two troughs, pounding severely whatever may be put in between the face of the mallet and the end of the trough, into which water runs. I believe they are used for washing cloth.

They were not working when we arrived, but the gushing of the waters over the dam frightened the Moor so much that I had a struggle to get him past, in order to tether him to a descendant of those tall trees under which the knight and squire waited for the dawn in so great perturbation. During this struggle arrived three sturdy knaves in shaggy sheepskin garments, two of them with muskets over their shoulders.

When I had tethered the Moor, I discovered I had lost a pistol from the loosened folds of my *faja* ; and on going back to look for it where I had wrestled with the Moor, it was not to be found. I asked the men, but they had not seen it. While I was still looking, and was growing somewhat disheartened—for the pistol was Harry's, and its loss would break his second pair—the men began to move off. One of them was already fifty yards away. Remembering, in the other case, a day or two ago, we had been sorry not to have searched the muleteer, and Harry being out of the way in the thicket tying up the Cid, so that I had nobody to consult, I ventured, on the impulse of the occasion, to suggest to the two men who remained, "that as they had formed part of the premises when I lost my pistol, and were about to convey themselves away, I should not feel satisfied unless I also searched their pockets." They slightly objected, saying they were honourable men, and had not seen my pistol ; however, I did it, and found nothing.

I now ran after the other man, and overtook him about two hundred yards further on. He was the sturdiest villain

Suffering a Recovery

of the three, and stoutly denying he knew anything of my pistol, told me to go back and look where I lost it. I again informed him that at the time of my loss he had been a part of the premises ; moreover, that I had searched his companions.

“ But you shall not search me,” he said, taking his gun from his shoulder, and holding it ready. I observed that it had a fresh bright copper cap on the nipple, so that it might possibly go off ; but I reflected, that if he had the pistol, and I continued resolute, he would probably rather give it up than fight, as I had my revolver still in my *faja*. So I advanced upon him as he retreated, keeping my eye upon him, and my hand on my revolver, so as not to let him have the first shot, if possible.

Just at the moment when I thought the combat was about to commence, and was on the point of drawing my weapon, he—I suppose, being convinced I was in earnest, and meant to see the adventure through to the end—fell soft, and said, “ You shall have your pistol.” He rather opened the flap of his *zamarra*,¹ and I saw the muzzle of the pistol peeping out of an inside pocket.

As he still showed a reluctance to part with it, without much politeness I at once grabbed it with my left hand, still keeping my right on the revolver.

So I left him with a *Vaya Vmd. con Dios*,² and came back in great glee to tell Harry what a great feat of (small) arms I had performed. He, like the captain in the ballad of “ Billy Taylor,” very much applauded what I had done.

The day was hot, and we began to make preparations for a bath above the mill-dam, putting the saddles, and cloaks,

¹ Fur-jacket.

² May your worship go with God.

Amicable Relations

and clothes, and pistols in a heap, over which one was to mount guard, while the other bathed.

As Harry was undressing, our friends of the late transaction came back with a large herd of goats—for they were *cabreros*—to go over the bridge at the dam. The principal thief looked rather ashamed of himself, and said—I suppose, by way of excuse,—

“If it had not been for me, you would never have found your pistol.”

“If it had not been for you, I should never have had any chance of losing it, that I know of. As it is, I feel more obliged to my good luck and the other pistol (patting the revolver’s butt) than to you.”

“That is truly a formidable weapon ; how many barrels may it have ? ”

“Seis tiros, bien cuentados ; salen uno tras otro ; y dichoso es Vmd. que no tuve precision de matar a Vmd. o media docena tales.”¹ He also admired our other arms, knives, daggers, &c. ; and pointing to the pistol he had lately had in his possession, with a lingering sentiment of affection, he said, “*Buena boca tiene aquella*” (She has a pretty mouth). It had a very large bore for so small a pistol, carrying a ball of about ten to the pound. As he went away on the other side of the river (we having enjoined them to betake themselves to a decent distance while we bathed), he said, in a contrite manner,—

“*Perdonad me, hombre !*” which, being freely translated, means, “Pardon me, that’s a good fellow.” “*Ya le hé perdonado*” (already I have pardoned you), I replied, and we saw no more of him.

¹ Six barrels, well counted ; they go off one after another ; and happy is your worship that I had not occasion to slay your worship, or half a dozen such.

Guardia Civil

Both of us having bathed in the cold clear pool, Harry began to sketch the mill, and I to try to set it in motion. It was very old and rickety. The half-rotten wheel had lost some of its paddles, and was so soddened and heavy that I could not for a long while, by stamping and kicking, get it round a foot or so, to let the gush of water come upon anything it could take hold of ; and it was so slippery, I was afraid that if I set it off it might knock me down, and dash me to pieces in the sluice. At last I got it to go, and round went the splashing wheel. Bang—bang—bang clumped the ponderous mallets alternately in the sloppy trough. After about twenty strokes, however, one of them fell out of the frame with a crash, and the wheel was locked ; so I gave it up, and began to sketch. For this I had not patience, it being a complicated job to give an idea of the machinery ; but while Harry drew, I wrote in my journal.

As I wrote, two men, who had come up unperceived, stood before me in sheepskin breeches with broad belts, and a musket apiece.

“ *Adios señores*, whence are you ? ”

“ From Seville,” we replied.

“ Are you not foreigners ? ”

“ *Retratistas* (portrait-painters), at your service. Would you like your portrait taken at three *reals* ? ”

“ Not thus,” said he, pointing to his sheepskin inexpressibles ; “ but I have a wife lives not half a league further up the valley ; I should like to have her portrait taken.”

“ I am sorry we have not time to go further, we must be back at Argamasilla by five ; with whom may we have the honour to speak ? ”

“ The Guardia Mayor.”

Where "Don Quixote" was Written

"Will your worship smoke?" offering him a *cigarillo*.

"Thank you; we have tobacco."

"*Tomad, hombre*" (help yourself, my dear sir), said I, with much cordiality. The fact was, I wished to draw a cloud before the eyes of these officials, to prevent them from observing that I had broken the rotten old mill, which they would have as much felt it incumbent on them to punish me for, as if it had been the soundest institution in Spain.

Before going away, we hewed two pieces of wood out of the huge decayed stump of a tree, which must have been growing in Don Quixote's time, as relics.

On our return to the *posada*, we found the *medico* waiting for us, and proceeded to the house of Quijana. A civil old woman brought a lamp, and we went down a flight of seven steps into a long, narrow, round-arched vault. This damp and dismal apartment is about ten feet broad, and twenty-four feet long, and seven feet high along the middle of the vault. She said, with as much certainty as if she had been on the spot at the time, and brought him his meals, that Cervantes sat at this end (turning to the left from the entrance), and he was allowed a lamp to write by.

We tried to fancy him there. A smallish, spare, high-featured man, with long hair and a neglected beard, a *manta* or two from his bed wrapped round his legs, and thrown over his shoulders; he sits, scratching away by fits and starts, in a quaint, beady hand, illegible to us moderns, as we peep inquisitively at the papers before him. Now and then he pauses, and looks at the flame of the lamp,—a smile flickers over the worn features,—some bright idea has crossed his mind,—he laughs aloud. We wonder the damp, dull echo of his prison-roof does not startle and chill his hilarity. But he is used to it, and takes no heed of where he is. His fancy is lit,—he is free now, and revelling in

Quieren Vmdes. Comer ?

some merry scene, which is word by word trickling into immortality from the nib of that worn and grub-nosed quill. Oh! thou rare heart, bright focus of human sympathies, which in one book couldst stuff so much good-fellowship, and wit, and truth, that all thy fellow-men, generation after generation, must go on reading it for ever and a day ; while every one of the millions who read, feels towards thee as a personal friend !

The *medico* afterwards took us to see the church, which is rather handsome inside, with large round columns. It is unfinished ; for Miguel Lopez, the architect, died before it was done. He also insisted on taking us to the *casino* and introducing us to the *élite* of Argamasillian society. We were ravenously hungry, not having eaten since our breakfast at half-past six in the morning, and it was now seven. A large body of the *casino* accompanied us to our hostel, and we had to go through the ceremony of asking them all to dine on one *pollo con arroz* (chicken and rice), which they politely declined, and retired. All except one man, whom we had not remarked before, but who was evidently a soldier of fortune, and had made up his mind to dine with us if it could be done. Seeing that he had a hungry and malevolent look, we only pressed him very slightly, and set to ourselves.

He sat in our room and entertained us with his conversation in the French language, which he spoke well, but in a stiff and precise manner. He had lived at Bayonne some years, probably obliged to quit Spain for some political offence.

He had also learned French opinions, and probably read a little of Voltaire's writings. When he dragged in his unbelief by the head and shoulders, saying that Christianity was "la religion des singes," I replied, "C'est bien possible,

Pickwick and Quixote

mais cela n'empêche point le Christianisme d'être bon pour l'homme, qui est le plus grand des singes." I also took occasion to use "plus bête qu'un philosophe" as an intensive of common folly.

When dinner was over, the *medico* appeared again, and the *alcalde* of the town, and others. We shortly adjourned to the house of the *medico*, where he gave us honey from Cuenca, which is celebrated for its bees, and *aguardiente*.

By the bye, you know from Baeza, we were aiming across country to Cuenca ; but finding that we should necessarily pass within one day's journey of Don Quixote's country, we thought it a pity to pass it by : so instead of going on by Infantes, San Clemente, and Valverde, as our first plan was, we turned back at *Venta Quemada*, towards the great road, which we reached at Manzanares, and now we shall go straight on to Madrid, and leave our ponies there to rest, which they will want very much, while we make expeditions to Cuenca, Toledo, &c., by diligence.

Ten or twelve more people stepped in, one after another, at the *medico's*, and when we went away accompanied us back to the *posada*, where we thanked them all for their *finura* and *politica* (attention and urbanity), and bade them good night. By the fuss they make with us, and by our having nothing to pay for seeing the dungeon, we argue that this pilgrimage is not very commonly made.

Next morning, at eight, we started to ride to the *Venta Quesada*. It was a fine day, and we were in good spirits, talking over our adventures of the day before. There had been a grumbling old woman at the *posada*, who reminded us of Mrs. Gummidge in "David Copperfield" ; and it was a natural transition from the Cervantes of the locality, to our own Cervantes of the present day.

I have always looked upon Pickwick (which will live as

Cervantes and Dickens

Dickens's great work) as a free translation of Don Quixote into the manners of modern England. Mr. Pickwick, in the simple enthusiasm of his heart, resolves to be the redresser of grievances. Sam Weller, the shrewd and humorous valet, is the natural Sancho of British low life ; always ready, like his prototype, with a quaint and homely common-sense view, to contrast with the flighty visions of his master. Jingle is Gines de Pasamonte, Wardle the hospitable sylvan duke. I remember once asking Lord Jeffrey about this likeness between Pickwick and Quixote, and he said it had not struck him before, but he thought there was some truth in it.

Cervantes was older when he wrote Don Quixote, and had seen a great deal more of the world. If Dickens had lost his arm at Lepanto—been a captive at Algiers—and seen twenty years of the very miscellaneous life of a soldiering poet in those romantic days, I see no reason to think he might not have written as good a book as Don Quixote. As it is, the deficiencies of the models he worked from are reflected in his work. But the singular and surpassing genius he displayed, at once gave him a blaze of popularity, too rapid for safety. Instead of going on improving his taste, and struggling earnestly to produce some perfect work, which should live for ever, and be a wonder to coming times (as he might have done, if he had not succeeded so rapidly), he fell to imitating himself profusely ; as if he meant to out-Herod Herod, or, to use a more simple expression, play the Dickens with himself. And he would have done it before this, had not his exquisite genius struggled with a much less exquisite taste ; for his mind cannot help yielding gems, however little careful he is to set them as they deserve.

That is why the young men of the present day prefer

Dickeray and Thackens

Thackeray to Dickens. Thackeray has seen more of the world they live in. Besides, he has more power of putting a story cleverly together ; which, I believe, critics (who are usually men that have the education of authors, without sufficient genius to write good books, or rashness to write bad) call the *divine* creative power. I take this to be merely imagination corrected by knowledge of the world. If there is less of the high poetical element in Thackeray's writing, he has the power of framing a much more consistent and credible body of fiction. Dickens imagines, as it were, through a microscope, and patches the minutely-painted pictures together higgledy-piggledy. Thackeray takes the whole of his history into his telescopic field. In fact, he imagines in larger pieces, or at any rate has the art to make his work hang together by a subtile tissue of unconscious evidence ; whereas the management of Dickens's stories is often full of unconscious inconsistencies.

We now began to consider what we should do on our visit to the celebrated *venta*. It was proposed and seconded that we should revive, in the person of the present *ventero*, the right, as by tenure, of investing fit and proper persons with the order of knighthood. If he was a man of humour, like the real *ventero* in Don Quixote's time, he would easily enter into the joke. But what should we call the order ? As there was nothing remaining of the old premises but the well, it was suggested we should be called "*Caballeros de la Orden del Pozo*" (Knights of the Order of the Well). He should slap our shoulders with his *navaja* (clasp-knife), for want of a better sword, and sprinkle us with a little water from the well. We would previously watch our pistols and daggers for the space of time in which we could smoke a *cigarillo*, and it should be counted a vigil.

Military Opposition

Engaged in such discourse, it suddenly occurred to us that the road had disappeared in the midst of a rough field, and we had a considerable amount of trouble and anxiety among the trackless broken ground of the plain before we could discover the *Venta Quesada*.

In the distance, curiously enough, it *did* look like a castle, as Don Quixote took it to be. There were two embattled turrets, which had been built in the war time, when it had been made a military station. We entered the courtyard of this building, supposing it to be the *venta*, but the soldiers pointed us through a doorway further on. As we were going through, a soldier started up and cried—

“Hollo! come back! where are your passports?”

“Who are you,” said I, “that have so little idea how you should address gentlemen of distinction? After we have attended to our beasts we will attend to you.”

“Gentlemen of distinction, indeed! you look more like Andalusian *contrabandistas*. Come here, sirs!”

“Come to us, if you have anything to say, you varlet or an insequent *militar!*” Here we went into the wretched little shed of a stable, and two soldiers followed us. After we had set barley before our ponies, we said, “Now, if you will ask civilly to see our papers, we will show you them, though it is exceedingly probable you cannot read.” On seeing their great size, and the complication of signatures and stamps attached to our passports, they became civiler, and began to exculpate themselves; a polite corporal came up and tried to smooth down the contention. But our opponents, finding our papers were all right, now hit on a new point of attack in our pistols. We showed our license to carry arms. “Yes,” said they, “an *escopet* (musket), but these pistols are forbidden weapons, and require a special license.”

A "Troughy"

"Nothing is forbidden to Englishmen," I remarked, in a confident manner, as if I was delivering a well-known axiom; "besides, it is specified in the papers that we are *personas de toda confianza*" (persons of all confidence). This clenched our defence. So we went and ate a very dirty potato-omelette. Afterwards we found the well: but it did not come up to our expectations, having been new-plastered. However, there was the old trough, cracked through the middle. I chipped a little bit off for a relic, or rather a *trophy*. Harry sketched the well. I sat before the *venta* door on a stool, writing at my journal, while the *ventero*, a bad-looking young man, with round idiotic eyes, played at cards with his wife, who was older and still more disagreeable in appearance than himself.

We thought no more about the *Orden del Pozo*; but rode away as soon as the ponies had eaten their corn. Near the point where we had lately emerged upon the *camino real*, there was a great new *venta*, outwardly fair to view; but when we came to inquire for beds, it proved to be unfinished, and full of bricks and mortar of emptiness. The people here had seen us go by before, and now asked what we had been to see at the *Venta Quesada*. We told them it was because the famous Don Quixote had been there. "Ah," said the landlord, "I myself have the fourth volume of his history, and know all about the beautiful Dulcinea del Toboso."

A little after sun-down we reached Villarta. Lent ended yesterday, I believe; and we certainly saw more meat consumed at this *venta* than we have yet seen on our way altogether. We got some excellent fried ham, the first unreesty sample we have met with since Seville, except, of course, in the great towns.

As we sat in our apartment, before going to bed, a con-

A Future State

versation arose, I don't remember out of what, concerning a future state, and whether it would be final or not. Harry thought it must : otherwise it would be most unsatisfactory, after being buffeted through this world with an expectation of final peace in the next, to find there was yet a struggle and an uncertainty beyond the grave.

“Yes, but we may wake and remember nothing of this state in the next, having in the baby germ of our nature the seeds of all the improvement our life in this world has wrought in us : and go to work fresh again, with as much spirit and cheerfulness as a man who went to sleep weary and dawled over-night, sets to his task again next morning.”

“That is more unsatisfactory still ; for then we should forget all those friendships, and ties of affection and kindred, which alone make life tolerable.”

“But you must remember that all these ties and relations have been formed in this planet ; and similar, nay better, may be formed in the next. We perhaps may meet the same souls again, and love them, though we do not remember them ; nor can we be sure that we are not here drawn towards the friends of some state prior to this, by a previous though unremembered sympathy. Life as it is, is well worth having ; there is much more pleasure than pain in it.”

“I do not know that : doubt makes us miserable.”

“It don't make me miserable. I feel quite satisfied that I am in the hands of All-Wisdom, and All-Love, and All-Power ; and I argue from past experience that I shall be treated better than I deserve. I am happy now, and thankful for my life. I am neither hungry, nor thirsty, nor cold. I am for the present interested with this discussion. If I want to smoke, I can light my pipe ; and if I grow sleepy, I can go

Happiness in Progress

to bed ; and these are the only pressing wants likely to occur I am prepared to go through fifty thousand worlds, and with forty-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine deaths between, so long as each (whether I can remember or compare them or not) be intrinsically better than the one before, and enjoyment continue to bear the same proportion to anxiety. As long as we can imagine any perfection to which we have not attained, we shall not rest completely satisfied. Perfect happiness, like all other perfection, can belong only to the Deity. It is only in the gradual approach and advancement towards this state, that the happiness of inferior natures can consist. We are made after God's own image, which probably means, that the nature of man contains in vague embryo, and much clogged besides with the material engine through which it now has to operate, a germ of all those attributes which, in their fulness and splendour of perfection, constitute the Being who created him. It is therefore impossible to over-estimate the height of glory to which man is capable of growing. But we see here that his progress is slow, and the presumption is, there will be many, in fact endless states, 'because,' as Tennyson says in that sublime speculation (the Two Voices)—'because the scale is infinite.' So we may go on, 'moving up from high to higher,' till 'we lose ourselves in light.'"

"Well, but what does your theory make of those who go the wrong way ?"

"Why, of course, they move down from low to lower, till they lose themselves in darkness. As the first become 'angels and ministers of grace,' the others become demons and ministers of disgrace ; and as the terminus of the one is perfection, that of the other is annihilation."

CHAPTER XXIV

MADRID, *April 16.*

HERE we are, safely arrived in Madrid. Our way from Villarta hither has not been fruitful in adventures, and the scenery could not easily have been more dreary and desolate. The only variation of the vast and wearisome plain consists of occasional broad, flat valleys, which look as if the surface, undermined by some volcanic action below, had given way, and gone down like the trap-door of a stage, leaving slovenly, crumbling, precipitous edges, some four or five hundred feet deep on either side.

Often the towns are hidden in these great gaps, so that there is no sign of any human habitation within the blank horizon.

We entered this sort of country at Puerto Lapiche, where we breakfasted after leaving Villarta. Here, on either side of the hills we were deserting, stood a crowd of Don Quixote's windmills. Here he turned off the *camino real* to do penance at the *Peña pobre*. The landlord knew nothing about this last place, but had a vague idea that Don Quixote had been in the place, and *quiza* (perhaps) the history had been written here.

I don't know whether it was Don Quixote's windmills which gave a romantic turn to our discourse, but it ran upon the strange and startling occurrences which do, from time to time, chequer the usually prosy pages of real life.

Cheops's Billets-doux

“But is real life really prosy? Or does it merely appear so, because men and women bury all their life's truly stirring incident, of highest rapture and of deepest anguish, in the silent archives of the soul; and uttering only what is common-place, make the faint echoes of written romance seem caricature?—or an obsolete picture of how men thought and felt in ruder and more serious times?”

“Man is still the same. There were no black-letter editions of the human heart, nor are its feelings now a bit more gilt-edged or satin-wove than when Cheops wrote his hieroglyphic *billets-doux* on papyrus.”

“The world has never changed, nor ever will. The only difference is, that we see too much of what is before our eyes; and familiarity breeds contempt. Gigantic qualities alone can pierce the haze of antiquity, and thence we conclude that all were then modelled on the proportions of the few great men we know. And those, too—how little we know them. If we were to summon up Abelard's cook-maid, and ask how her master looked on that Friday afternoon when he had just received Eloisa's most touching letter, describing how, ‘as time creeps on, all human affections,’ &c.—what account of Abelard would his cook-maid give? She would probably describe him as a red-nosed testy old fellow of about fifty-eight, in a greasy old *soutane*; and that, on the particular occasion above mentioned, he was reprimanding her severely for allowing the bishop to set his foot in a dish of parsnips dressed with cream.”

“To be sure. And, on the other hand, I see no reason to doubt that there are Pyramuses and Thisbes who peep at one another through opera-glasses instead of holes in the wall; and Romeos and Juliets who meet (whether at Devonshire House or the Whittington Club balls), and love just as suddenly, desperately, and fatally.”

What were our Ancestors About ?

“Talking about Romeo and Juliet, do you know, when I was at Warsaw, or Cracow, or somewhere, after the siege of Vienna, I saw the mummy of a beautiful princess who had died on her wedding-day ; and that was all that was known about her ; and what an open field for speculation on possible loves, disgusts, jealousies, poisonings, heart-breakings, &c., does it leave to the imagination ! She had been well dried up, and there was the remnant of great beauty still traceable in the wizened features. There she lay in her glass case ; a real young lady of the dark ages in her wedding-dress.”

“And yet, after all, it is possible she died of *angina pectoris* ; and neither poisoned herself to escape the arms of a detested bridegroom, nor was poisoned by a black-hearted rival beauty, nor broke her heart for another young man. But what times those middle-ages must have been, since, in spite of theories, one cannot help believing them to have been full of romance and adventure. Think of the Crusades ; though, perhaps, our wars in India and at the Cape will seem as romantic to readers a thousand years to come. But then, those Norman skippers, making a run of contraband lances upon the coast of a kingdom, and cutting a whole province out of its side ! In those days dynasties were founded as easily as you now may get a peerage. What were *our* ancestors about, when the bastard duke and the Guiscards were coolly taking possession of England and Naples ? Why did *they* stand with their hands in their pockets, and not take a kingdom and leave it to us ? But if they had, we should only have been princes of the blood, for our elder brothers would have sacked the kingdom. And I should think it would be very indifferent fun being a prince of the blood ;—all the restraint of greatness, with none of the power.”

New Dynasties

“But I don't see why we should want to be princes of the blood, and the effete descendants of some great man. Dynasties have not ceased to be formed. Napoleon was a much greater man than Alexander the Great; and Bernadotte will leave a dynasty as long as the Ptolemies. Besides, Louis Buonaparte is coming up, and will play young Octavius to his uncle's Cæsar.”

“I hope he will succeed; not because I know or care anything about his politics, but because I should like to see a real new dynasty formed, just to show people that they remain precisely in the same state as when Saul was chosen from the family of Kish to rule over Israel. Once, when I was wandering through the royal crypts of Saint Denis, and came to the massive portals (armed with bars of bronze and complicated locks and bolts), where Napoleon had prepared himself a last resting-place, I felt there was a want of completeness in his not being there, and I felt sorry. I have no sympathy with the man; but I like the incident of an emperor of half Europe being born in a country town or a little island, and turning the whole world topsy-turvy. I feel no disloyal indifference towards our excellent Queen Victoria—whom, with all her progeny, Heaven preserve!—but if it could have happened without disadvantage to her, and the dear little princes and princesses, I wish Richard Cromwell had been a competent man, and reigned over England; and that the great Oliver had died with the crown on the top of his bedstead. A change is a good thing now and then. He had very near as good a right to be king as Henry Tudor before he married the heiress of York. But come; the ferment of Napoleon's times has not settled down yet, and we may have a chance before we die. When the revolution comes, whoever, like Themistocles, can always of a sudden say what is most fit to be said,

Transcendental Toryism

and do what is most fit to be done, will be the Cromwell of his day.

“Shake but a scuttleful
Of gravel, the big pebbles come atop.
When times are troublous, great men, jostled forth,
Stand in the front of action. When the mind
Is moved, great qualities, before unknown,
Rise on emergency. For, while kind Heaven
Is liberal of much-neglected means,
Man neither knows his weakness nor his strength,
Till time and trial shape his destiny.’”

“You are getting dreadfully republican, if not revolutionary, all of a sudden. I thought you were a Tory.”

“I am, as yet, a dreamer, and therefore hold all politics and creeds of which I have a sufficient smattering to form an element in the hodge-podge of my opinions. A man does not form his opinions really till he begins to act. The weight of responsibility on the shoulders is like an hydraulic press : it leaves no room for froth. But I am not sure that the most transcendental Toryism would not be a belief such as I profess at present. Mind you, for this half hour only. The world is nothing but a great machine for milling the souls of men. It was just as fit for the purpose in Adam’s time as now. But physical and intellectual effort being a necessary part of his probation, physical truths of great commercial value and convenience are scattered liberally in his way. However these be, one by one, grubbed out by the snout of science ; however systems of government shift, and split, and fall away ; the world remains the same in its moral relation to the soul of man ; nor does it alter, as far as I can see, in its effectual capacity of training our spiritual nature. What difference does it make to my soul whether I dig or plough, or whether I travel by mule or locomotive

Tembleque and Ocaña

engine? I believe that in different ways, varying by progression, the same passions and temptations come with the same force to generation after generation, from the apple and twig of Adam to the sceptre and ball of Napoleon. Man, with all his boasted advancement, gets no further. He is working in a spacious house of correction, with science for his treadmill-wheel. Or he is picking the arts, instead of oakum, with a vague yearning for some dimly-conceived ideal of beauty. Alas, if we come out of our house of correction worse than we went in !”

“Yes ; but, my dear sir, you must allow that man is in a better state since the spread of Christianity.”

“Certainly ; but that is the free gift of God, and not any merit of man’s own. I argue that the only real advantage which man gets from his boasted march of intellect is physical convenience and intellectual activity—a condition, not a result. I deny any strictly essential good arising directly from the results of his labour. They will all probably perish with the world, when a higher range of truth opens to our eyes, and be resolved into a mere supplementary nothing to the original nothingness out of which the world was made.”

We rode down into Tembleque—a cold-looking, miserable place ; supped on mutton-chops (evidently off some tough old ram), fried potatoes, and salad. There was a large party supping in the kitchen, and after a little conversation, one of the company asked us if we were Andalusians. An older man answered for us, “The dress is the dress of the Andaluzes, but the tongue not.”

Next day we passed Ocaña. Our ponies were weak on their legs, and cut their fetlocks a good deal. I filed off the heads of some obnoxious nails, but it did little good. I then tied up the wounded fetlock in a silk handkerchief, so that the Moor could do it no more harm for the present ; but he was

Aranjuez

already rather lame. At Ocaña we left the main road for a short cut which came out at Montivola, a village chiefly formed of troglodyte habitations, burrowed out of the loamy hill; and from the flats above the village, we saw a fine range of snow mountains, which must be beyond Madrid.

Here we descended to a somewhat lower level. Towards dusk we came in sight of water, a large sheet. At first we took it for the Tagus, but it turned out to be a lake, where innumerable frogs were croaking vociferously. I fired my revolver in among them, and they stopped a moment, and then began louder than ever, as if the report had given them a fresh topic of conversation. After a while we descended into the valley of the Tagus.

Aranjuez seemed a pretty place, full of trees and gardens, quite a paradise after the dreary country through which we had just travelled; but unluckily it was very nearly dark when we got there. The *moza*, with whom I had carried on a considerable conversation while she was arranging the beds, ended by asking me whether I was an Andaluz. It appears our disguise is beginning to take effect. The Castilians have a great contempt for the orthoepy of their southern neighbours, so that it is but a slight compliment to our Spanish after all.

Next morning we passed out of Aranjuez. It is a picturesque, gay tea-garden-looking town; full of brick and stucco colonnades and gingerbread triumphal arches, and avenues of really fine trees, and glittering fountains, and bridges and waterfalls, and flowers and statues and columns; altogether making a brilliant though somewhat French and artificial *ensemble*. The palace has a faint resemblance to the Tuileries. I dare say it is a very pleasant place for the Court to lounge through the hot summer months.

Along the last seventy or eighty miles of road, we have

First View of Madrid

seen, every mile or so, a party of *camineros*, with muskets pitched and implements to mend the way. All, without one exception, have been either eating, drinking, smoking, or sleeping : to-day, however, we actually saw one of them tightening his belt, as if he really was going to work. We wondered whether Dean Swift had ever seen Spain—Laputa has a Spanish sound. Baited at Val de Moro. Soon after leaving this place we topped a long rise, and saw Madrid about eight or nine miles before us.

It was a better-looking place than we had imagined—a good, compact mass of towers and steeples, and pinnacles crowning the brow of a hill. We forded the Manzanares, which was broad and deepish for us on our little ponies. It was now dusk, and the soldier at the *octroi* (excise-office) stopped us as suspicious-looking countrymen, likely to be smugglers.

“Whom have we here ?” cried he.

“*Caballeros Ingleses en viage*,” I replied glibly ; and it appeared we so little came up to his ideas of English gentlemen on their travels, that he preferred to consider it as an excellent joke.

“Ha, ha, ha ! *You* English gentlemen ! You are *contrabandistas* from Malaga, more likely ; and I’ll be bound you have some excellent bottles in your *alforjas* !” Here he began feeling and ferreting in them. “Ha ! the bottom is wet ; there is a broken bottle in them somewhere.”

“*Caramba ! Señor doganero* ; I should have thought you knew the water of Manzanares from the wine of Malaga. We have ridden through the river, and have no contraband drinks about us. It is a *verdad catolica* (Catholic truth) that we *are* English gentlemen, and that the sooner you can satisfy yourself that these are only dirty shirts and stockings

Puerta del Sol

in our saddle-bags, the sooner we shall sup, *si Dios quiere*" (please God). As he found nothing in the bottle line, he let us go. What we really were afraid he might find, was our pistols; for we had heard that the law against wearing arms is much more stringently enforced in the capital than the provinces.

The *Fonda de la Viscaina*, to which we had been recommended by our hostess at Granada, is an apartment in the great Casa del Maragato, near the Puerta del Sol, the centre of Madrid. Thither we threaded our way by inquiry among real metropolitan crowded streets. The Puerta del Sol is not a gate, though I suppose it once was, but a not very remarkable butt-end of buildings, situated between the Calle de Alcalá and the Carrera San Hieronimo, which streets here form a fork, of which the Calle Mayor (still larger than either) is the handle. This butt-end is principally distinguished in the darker hours by an illuminated clock-face—the Horse-Guards of Madrid.

Opposite the lofty-arched portals of the Casa del Maragato, while we were debating how to attack so huge an edifice, which bore no signs of containing any *fonda*, and looked more like some great official building, we were addressed in English:—

"Beg pardon, sir, I suppose you will be the gentlemen from Granada; allow me to take your horses. Pedro, carry these *caballeros'* *alforjas* up into the *fonda*."

"That's all very fine; but where are you going to take our ponies to, and who are you?"

"I'm the English interpreter to the establishment. Mrs. Vasquez wrote about you coming. I'll just take the horses round to Lamb's livery-stables." We felt a certain doubt whether we should ever see the Moor and Cid again, and a twitch of conscience, for fear, if *we* did not give them

The British Lion and Lamb

their barley, and unlace their *cinchas*,¹ they might be badly looked after by less affectionate and accustomed hands. But we were tired and hungry, and the stable was reported to be a long way off, to which we objected, and threatened to go to a *posada*; but they told us there were no *posadas* with stables attached to them, except in the suburbs; so we went in under the lofty arch, and up an interminable flight of stairs. When we got there, we found the house was full. Some other gentlemen had arrived from Granada, who had been mistaken for us, and the rooms kept for us had been filled; but a story higher, a widow kept lodgings, and we might be accommodated, if we would. Here, at the very top of the house, we found a very comfortable apartment. We washed and supped, and sallied forth upon the crowded lamplight; had iced *orchata* (almond milk) at the *Café Suizo*, in the *Calle de Alcalá*. Since then, I have been writing, and it is time now to go to bed; the clock in the *Puerta del Sol* has just struck twelve.

This morning, after breakfast, we were waited upon by a shabby, little, silly, chattering *pretendiente*, or place-hunter. He had heard of us from his friends in Granada, and came to offer his services to be generally useful. I went with the English interpreter to the livery-stables, where I agreed with Mr. Lamb, a most disreputable, gloomy-looking rogue, with a long waistcoat, drab trowsers, and a straw in his mouth, to keep the ponies at six *reals* each a day. Harry has been with the *pretendiente* to get our luggage out of the *galera* office. They have just returned, and are in an altercation with the porters.

They appealed to me, and I took out my watch, and said, if they did not take what was offered in the course of two

¹ A barbarous *circingle*, going over the saddle, fastened by an iron hoop, a cross splint of wood, and a thong.

What is Patriotism ?

minutes, they should have two *reals* less. Now they are gone, and I can write again. Harry's hat is dreadfully mangled, indeed desperately. He has sent out the *pretendiente* to buy him another, and borrow a fiddle. Madrid is a cheerful-looking town by daylight. At breakfast this morning we met an agreeable Englishman, a contemporary of mine at Eton, and now a fellow of King's. He got the Latin poem medal the same year I did the English one. We have fraternised, and already talk of making an excursion to Toledo together. His name is B——.

We shall stay here a fortnight or three weeks, till we have made our excursions, and seen the place. Then we shall turn our bridle-reins towards our native land. What is patriotism ? Nothing but the love of my country, because it happens to be *my* country,—the land of *my* ancestors,—*my* home,—to say nothing of being the somewhat ample shrine of *my* little patroness saint. The true, unselfish, ethereal, abstract sort of thing would be to feel patriotism because it was somebody else's country.

CHAPTER XXV

MADRID, *April 22.*

I HAVE kept no journal since we reached Madrid, and must write something, or I shall forget all about it, and have no materials to work upon.

Oh, stern necessity of authors, to be always preserving and potting the amusement of the day for future profit ! Oh, literature, literature ! thou art indeed a base and servile trade. From suggestive scraps here and there, out of these matter-of-fact rambling epistles, I shall have to construct a brisk and sparkling narrative of things which never happened, and sentiments I never felt,—and all because the British public has an acquired taste for artificial writing, as they have for doctored wines. The pure vintage of the heart, like genuine clarets, seems poor and sour. It must be brandied with forced hilarity, and Burgundied with a body of rich and racy shams. It must have a bouquet of chemically-prepared sentiment, and then it is fit to be volumed from the rough cask of MS., and decanted into the reviews.

We shall have to write something very careful this time to establish our reputations, for we are getting stricken in years (Harry and I are twenty-five and twenty-six) ; and if we *are* to be famous, we ought to make haste ; for what's the fun of being famous when we are fat puffy men or

The Twilight of Dawn

forty? Everybody is famous then; it is too common to be worth mentioning.

But fame when young, if there's a possibility
Of getting it, is worth the wear and tear :
It almost equals money or nobility
To help you to the candid world's esteem—
Their dinners, balls, and general civility.

I quote from an unpublished piece in *terza rima*, written when I was about eighteen, and, in confidence, I don't see I write any better now than I did then. Criticism, and prudence, and acquired facts to work upon, are all, or nearly all, a man gets by years, more than he had when he was a boy; perhaps a little more mental endurance, but I don't think the actual creative energy of the mind increases much after fifteen or sixteen.

If I ever write a novel, I will certainly begin with my hero at seventeen, and leave him at twenty very much the same as I found him, in a practical point of view, but having gone through a splendid career of romance and experience.

By the way, "Vivian Grey" is an excellent instance of the success of this. With an older hero, whom you are led to believe is in every way fitted to become a prominent man in his country, you begin, towards the end of the third volume, to wonder why he is not Secretary of State, or Chancellor of the Exchequer; and the fact that these offices are filled by other functionaries, destroys the truth-seeming of the tale; whereas the triumphs and glory of a boy are all permitted to be legitimately in the clouds, and we look upon them with the same un-matter-of-fact feelings as on a gorgeous sunrise.

Now I must tell you a little about how we have been

A False Start

passing the last week or so since our arrival in *La Corte*; for so Madrid is called. After gaping and staring about us in a bewildered sort of way for a day or two, we agreed to go to Toledo with Mr. A—— B——. We caused the *pretendiente*, who proves a very inefficient pretender (in fact, a frightened, half-witted, chattering, melancholy impostor), to inquire about the most convenient way of going. He went hither and thither, and made a great to do, but could not form an opinion between the advantages of the direct diligence and the railway to Aranjuez. We selected the latter, and having conveyed ourselves to the station, found that we had an hour and a quarter to wait. This was an unlucky start, but, by the help of conversation, we got through the interregnum.

When we reached Aranjuez, we of course made diligent inquiry for the Toledo *diligencia*, and learnt that it started from a *posada* about three-quarters of a mile off. Hurrying to secure places, we were told at the *Posada de Santa Isabel* that the diligence had gone to the station. Rushing back to the station, we found that the diligence had been waiting there all the time, but out of sight behind some buildings, and had lately started in apathetic despair of passengers, quite empty, for Toledo. Its conductor had probably been smoking the cigar of resignation, while he ought to have been looking for travellers; and the railway officials, of whom we had inquired, had not thought fit to do his business for him.

With sundry maledictions on the way affairs are managed in the Peninsula, we entered the town once more, and inquired for a private conveyance; but the charges were so high, and the rate of going so slow, that it appeared to us the cheapest and simplest way to pass the afternoon (which had now turned out fine, after an unpromising morning) in

Aranjuez and Eton

Aranjuez, and return by rail, to take the direct diligence, after all.

So we made the best of our unfortunate experiment, and loitered about among the gardens, and pleasure-grounds, and groves, discoursing peripatetic philosophy on many subjects, but chiefly education; *apropos* of B—— having that morning received a letter, calling him up to Eton, as a master.

To me—leaving Eton as a little boy of fourteen, and sealing up, as one always does, my memories of the place as I left it, without allowance for changes moving on unseen—it seemed strange, and a sudden accession of great age to myself, to find a boy of the form below me all at once become one of those dreaded potentates—vicegerents of Jupiter himself—wrapped in a rustling cloud of dignity and black silk.

To B——, however, who had grown up at Eton, and known some slight foretaste of his present responsibilities as a sixth-form boy, and still more as captain of the school—who had lived with present masters as companions, both at Eton and King's—the appointment suggested a long future of patient drudgery, among troublesome little boys, contrasted with the happy recollections of his own school days.

We consoled him over his good fortune (for you must know that an Eton mastership is a very comfortable thing in many points of view, and all good fortune has its drawbacks), by placing his profession in the most poetical light we could. While he and Harry sat on a magnificently carved but dampish marble bench, I, who was afraid it might, as the phrase is, strike cold if I sat down, stood before them, and delivered something like the following charge, whose intermittent pauses in the cigar-puff were taken up by the bubbling murmurs of that quaintly-graven

A Charge on Education

fountain whose portrait by the great Velasquez hangs in the royal gallery of Madrid.

“When a man enters upon any profession, he is always met in the vestibule of it by a troublesome crowd of attendant difficulties and disadvantages. And this is well ; for the incompetent may as well be disheartened at once, while the able master must familiarise himself with adverse influences which he has in the sequel to correct and overcome.

“Let us consider these difficulties and disadvantages in the case of the teacher. There is a daily trial of patience with refractory little imps ; a daily pounding over the same short road of juvenile study. There is the temptation to neglect—the temptation to tyranny—the temptation to favouritism. A short-sighted, ambitious man might slur over the education of his boys, to cultivate his own mind. A hasty man might easily slip into the habit of using his almost despotic power without due conscientious consideration. An enthusiastic man would naturally be led to expend all his attention on promising and congenial pupils, to the prejudice of others.

“You may say such a profession is a death-blow to ambitious prospects. I answer, that a calling in which a young man acquires scrupulous care, discrimination, and justice, cannot be throwing time away ; and that learning to rule boys is the first step towards ruling men. You will say, ‘There is no instance ! A man gets lazy, and loses his mettle like a horse in a mill. A pedagogue never becomes anything more.’

“Great men are rare, I answer, and still rarer are those who have grown great in comfortable situations.

“But say that the profession of a teacher leads to nothing but a very improbable bishopric, which is of no service to a

Genuine Dignity

layman's anticipations. What is ambition of any reasonable and noble kind, but a desire to influence the minds of men in your day? Agreed; but you think it an unsatisfactory substitute to influence the minds of boys. All ambition is too eager for rapid results. Those boys will be men—and when do you think you will find their minds so open and accessible to worthy influences as in the tender and comparatively pure season of their youth?

“Do you think, if you were a clever, harassed leader of the House of Commons, with a pack of wrong-headed country gentlemen at your back, you would be influencing the mind of your fellow-creatures more effectually?”

“I know it is difficult to influence without being a companion as well as a teacher; and it is difficult not to lose some of the magisterial awe and grandeur in that familiar frankness which alone can make a man agreeable to boys. But however the shams of this world demand reserve, whatever is real may be safely open and free. True power comes from real capability, true dignity from real virtue. A truly capable and good man will never lose his power or his dignity among his boys by being too familiarly known: familiarity only breeds contempt when the person we are familiar with is more or less contemptible, which, I fear, in some points, is more or less the case with us all.

“To be a good teacher requires a more perfect combination of great and well-balanced qualities than any other profession whatever. Other powers are checked, and kept in order by republican elements, out of the clash of which a tolerable approximation to truth and justice is jostled. But the master is a despot, and on him alone depends whether his despotism be for good or evil. It is a very arduous task; enough to make anybody anxious and uncertain of his capacity for it.

Long Chamber

“Still I think it possible for a very good, and prudent, and earnest-minded man (let us say one man in ten thousand) to be a good schoolmaster ; and depend upon it, it is a very noble ambition to be that man. The more so, as he may be one of the greatest and most useful men in his country, without being distressed by the stupid blockheads whose voices make the noise of Fame, finding out that he is anything more than ‘a very good schoolmaster—a most excellent man to trust with one’s boys!’

“And this, I hope, will be the report I shall hear from some great blockhead, when I am determined to take up two or three of my little blockheads to Dr. B——, then head-master of Eton. And as I hand you my envelope of ten-pound notes (as if it was a letter of parental instructions), I shall refer you, for my wishes with regard to my children, to a conversation some five-and-twenty years ago in the gardens of Aranjuez. And my eldest little boy, as we come out of the door at the bottom of the tower, where we had been registering our names, will say,—

“‘I think Dr. B—— looks rather a good old boy, papa, but where is Arrang-hweth, papa?’

“‘Aranjuez, my son, is the Windsor of Spain, or rather the Versailles.’

“‘Was it built by Louis Quatorze, papa?’”

We wandered about among the leafy avenues and glades, while B—— told us amusing stories about life in Long Chamber, where all the collegers used formerly to live in a sort of prison republic ; but it is now cut up into separate bedrooms, and glazed : in my time there were only iron gratings in the windows. There used to be fancy balls and theatricals, and masquerades and hot suppers, up in that Long Chamber, and there was a tradition that, in earlier times, an old sow had been carried up the narrow stairs, and

Her Catholic Majesty

kept on the roof till she littered, and furnished roast-pig for a month.

When we came to all the little pigs, it reminded us we were hungry, and we returned to our *restaurant*, inquiring, as we passed the palace gates, what time the Queen was likely to come out ; but they said it was uncertain. So we dined, and returned to the gardens, and loitered about among the flowers and statues, till the *gay manta* of sunset was weaving in the western sky, and it was almost time to think of returning to Madrid.

Just as we were moving away, there was a trampling of horses in the distance, and the royal *cortège* of trundling carriages and trotting guards came by. We saw her Catholic Majesty very tolerably as she passed. But our acquaintance was not to be so transitory. The whole line wheeled round in a semicircle, and drew up before a house in the great *plaza*, next the garden.

An old lady and a bald-headed gentleman came out on the balcony over the colonnade. These were the Queen Mother and Señor Muñoz. We drew near to see and hear what passed, and stood, with our hats off, under the colonnade, within three or four yards of the Queen's panel, while she talked over our heads to her relatives on the balcony.

She spoke in a clear, pleasant, natural voice, so that every word could be heard both by those above and below. The matter was entirely domestic : inquiring about Christina's children, who had the measles (which, by the way, accounted for this sort of *visit*, by the fear of the little Princess of Asturias catching them) ; she related how her own baby had been, and took it from the gaily-dressed Asturian nurse, and held it up to be looked at.

As far as I remember, the presumptive heiress of all the

Toledo

Spain had slept rather badly the night before, and certainly seemed sleepy now. The Queen is a prettyish, lady-like woman, and looks about twenty-five. Her nose certainly is not a very choice feature, but not near so bad as those frightful snub-nosed caricatures on her coins would lead one to expect.

There was something singular in the perfectly easy, unembarrassed, and unaffected manner in which she talked of her household interests before a gathering crowd of her subjects; as if she saw no reason why a queen should pretend to be more than a woman, or be ashamed of her maternal anxieties and filial duties. But kings and queens are accustomed to live in public, and I dare say she thought no more of the hundred and fifty people or so who surrounded her than if they had been half a dozen busts in her own bedroom.

So we went back to Madrid, on the whole not dissatisfied with our day, nor altogether sorry we had missed the Toledo diligence.

Next day we learnt by inquiries, made this time in person, that the diligence only went alternate days, and would not go till the morrow. I passed the evening at the house of the Duque de R——, a poet, historian, and an agreeable man: formerly ambassador of Naples. He has some lively and pleasant daughters, and there was a good deal of cheerful conversation. I went without invitation, having been made free of the house, and the Duquesa receiving every evening. I had made the Duque's acquaintance in Seville, when he asked me to come and see him as I passed Madrid.

At last we got off to Toledo by the direct diligence. After six or seven hours of bleak uninteresting country, we went up a steep hill, and under a great Moorish gateway. I am

The Armeria

sorry to say that the expectations we had formed of Toledo were not realised. We immediately set about seeing what was to be seen ; but the cathedral, which we began with, did not strike us much ; it has neither much grace nor magnificence. What struck me most, were some large and rather brilliant frescoes along the arched walls of the cloister. They are, I believe, neither very antique nor very excellent in point of art ; but the effect was peculiar.

The view of the city from the tower was cold and stony, with but little beauty or irregularity of form in the hill on which it stands. B—— had to go back on the morrow early, and we determined to accompany him, instead of waiting two days more for the diligence's next trip. I think, perhaps, if it had not been for the sake of his agreeable society, we might have stayed, on the chance of Toledo's improving on further acquaintance. But this overbalanced our further curiosity ; so, as I wanted to have a real Toledo blade for my court sword, I made haste, and left them in the cathedral-tower, and hurried down to the *armeria*, which lies below the city, about a mile out, that I might get there before it closed.

It is a huge building, where the clash and clang of hammers and the roar of furnaces resound. It is a government fabric, but there is a bureau where they keep samples for sale. I bought the lightest small-sword I could find, and a dagger for Harry. As I was coming away I met Harry and B——. We went and sat by the banks of the Tagus, near a watermill.

The view of Toledo here, where the river sweeps round the foot of the long battlement-crowned hill, is picturesque ; and Harry got out his sketch-book, while we sat and extemporised little better than nonsense verses on the sunset, and the Tagus, and Toledo ; and while I washed and rubbed

A Sordid Muse

the grimy handle of my blade (which had already considerably blackened my hand) in the water and sand of the river.

I.

It was the sunset hour—
On battlement and tower
Gleam'd the red slanting rays :
High up Toledo, piled
In massive grandeur, smiled
Grimly, like some old warrior lit with battle's blaze.

II.

Upon the tawny sand,
A sword-blade in his hand,
A northern youth there knelt—
He plunged the weapon keen
In Tajo's ripples sheen :
“TAJADÓR, I do baptize thee, thou new glory of my belt !

III.

“Perchance, long hid beneath
Thy silver-clasped sheath,
Worn but for courtly show—
Who knows?—a day may dawn,
When in right earnest drawn,
Thy temper may be put to proof by parry and by blow !”

“Bravo, most valiant bard !” said B——, “and *Tajadór* (the cutter) would be a most excellent name for a sword baptized in the Tajo, if it only had a trenchant edge ; but this one, being a small-sword with no edge at all, gives me scruples.”

“What of that ? It has a point, and so has my joke ; and if my joke's point don't make people laugh, my sword's point shall make them cry. Come, make me a good Latin pun, *apropos* of a Toledo blade, while I turn some English ones ; for I will engrave it all over with epigrams, and make it the

A Comical Blade

most comical blade in all Christendom." He took out a pencil and the back of a letter, and began to turn about his materials. In a minute or two he hit off this—

TIMETOLETVM,

which (I need scarcely tell the erudite reader) reads, either

TIME TOLETVM (honour Toledo), or
TIMETO LETVM (fear death).

Here are some of mine, merely general mottoes for a small-sword, without reference to Toledo, which I could make nothing of.

I.

THOUGH SLIGHT I AM, NO SLIGHT I STAND,
SAVING MY MASTER'S SLEIGHT OF HAND.

II.

'GAINST WORDS OR DEEDS MY WEARER MAY RESENT,
I'M A COOL, POLISHED, POINTED ARGUMENT.

III.

COME TO THE POINT—UNLESS YOU DO,
THE POINT WILL SHORTLY COME TO YOU.

IV.

IF THE HINTS WRITTEN ON MY BLADE,
THROUGH EYE OR EAR MAY NOT PERSUADE ;
I TO YOUR *HEART* A WAY CAN FIND,
PERHAPS NOT SO MUCH TO YOUR *MIND*.

B—— also suggested, as a proper motto for the hilt, this Spanish one, which Ford gives as used on some old Toledo blade :—

NO ME SAQUES SIN RAZON,
NO M' ENVAINES SIN HONOR.

(Do not draw me without reason—
Do not sheathe me without honour.)

Piously Truculent

Gayangos, the great Moorish antiquarian of Spain, who happened to call on me the day after our return, gave me the following inscription :—

لاقتل عداك بنصر الله

(I will slay thine enemy by the help of the Lord.)

We returned to Madrid early next morning without adventures, and have equally without adventures passed three or four days since our return, chiefly in the picture-galleries, on which I don't feel inclined at present, if ever, to enlarge. We have got tickets for a bull-fight to-morrow. In a few days we shall go to Cuenca.

The following is a letter written from Madrid, of which the author has by fair words recovered the copyright from its fair proprietress, and of which the reader, if he or she be not of a sentimental turn, may skip as much as he or she chooses.

CHAPTER XXVI

LETTER TO ———

MADRID, *April 29.*

You were once pleased to observe, dearest critic, that my letters were generally the most amusing when they were about nothing at all. It would have been more complimentary to have put it, "When they were about nothing particular," for that is my favourite and most usual style: and indeed I now take up my pen to scribble you a line or two before we start for Cuenca, being precisely in the predicament of having nothing particular to say.

The first axiom of letter-writing is, "Put pen to paper, and you may depend something will come of it." What a common and ridiculous excuse heads half the letters of one's dearest friends:—"I have been intending to write to you the last six months, but I had nothing particular to say." I always answer on such occasions, "Then why the deuce didn't you write, and *say* nothing particular?"

It is a week since I wrote last; and I have got so much infected with a vicious habit of correspondence, that the desire of writing comes upon me independent of any plethoric secretion of epistolary elements.

I am drawn to my blotting-book as the best representative I can find in Madrid of your portals in Berkeley Square. While I write to you, I am in your society, as much as

Learnt by Heart

memory and imagination can patch up a counterfeit of reality. I fancy I hear your voice, answering the foolish things I write.

You seem to sit near me in that great old damask chair whose ebony elbows are carved with lions' heads and claws, where you so often sit in the library after breakfast. I see the lights move on the rich, brown, wavy clusters of your hair, as you look up at me, with an incredulous smile lighting the delicate transparent features, to cross-question me whether I can really call up a fair familiar spirit, the double of yourself.

I see you very plainly (or let us say, very prettily) at this moment. I see the stained sunlight of the library's oriel flicker on the loose pleats of a longish-waisted dress, as you breathe. "Come, what colour is my dress?" you say suddenly, thinking I shall not be able to tell, on the emergency, and so be exposed in a mild attempt at second sight. My dear madam, I have not studied your dresses with the same attention I have devoted to yourself: but your dress is grey, a lightish French grey, and it has a shiny look, like poplin, or something of that sort; but I am not learned in stuffs.

But, suffice it to say, I have a general and picturesque consciousness of your presence, which catches all the principal points distinctly, and leaves the rest undefined. For instance, I can see your *châtelaine*, and your pocket-handkerchief trimmed with Valenciennes, and I can plainly smell that there is *eau-de-cologne* among the cambric-folds. I assure you, I felt just now a distinct temporary scruple in lighting my *cigarillo* in your presence.

How is it in your case? When you are reading one of my letters, for instance, do you imagine me talking in the genuine unmusical tones of my own voice?—do you see me

A Spanish Comedy

twirling impatiently round, like a Hindoo votary in torture, on the music-stool (which I have brought up near your chair), when you *think* some cruel and unkind remark? “It is just like one of your impertinent questions. Don’t talk nonsense, but tell me something amusing, for example, something about your life in Madrid, now!”

But, of course, I prefer to talk nonsense. How much of my life in Madrid do you think I should tell you if I was sitting on the twirly music-stool at this moment, instead of where I am at the top of the *Casa del Maragato*, with my sweating candle only for company, for Harry has been in bed in the little room adjoining some time, and the other candle lately burnt out?

It is past twelve. We came home at eleven from the Teatro del Principe, where we saw a comedy that would have amused you. It is called *El Ingles y el Viscaino*. The Biscayan is ruined, and contemplating suicide, repairs to the river. When he is about to throw himself in, he finds he is observed by a melancholy man, in a drab great-coat with a cape, who he feels sure will have him fished out. He retires to wait till the coast is clear.

The melancholy drab man comes forward, and proves to be an English *milord*, who, finding life a bore, has determined to make an end of it. He contemplates his past life. “Here I am, a man with fifty thousand guineas of rent, in perfect health, possessing everything, in fact, which people who haven’t got, wish for; and yet I am miserable.

“I have tried everything. I bought a ship and sailed round the world. I am tired of travelling. Once I tried sleeping twenty hours a day: but I got tired of my bed.

“There is nothing for it but drowning,—the only thing I have not yet tried. The famous *Shikkypeer* has written a noble soliloquy on suicide. Come, I will repeat it: *Ser*,

Despair and Disgust

*b no ser—eso es el Caso*¹ (a pause) ;—there is an impediment to my finishing the soliloquy, for, now I come to think of it, I never could remember more than the first line. I must drown myself, evidently, without repeating the soliloquy.” He goes to the bank, and meets the Biscayan.

“What do you mean, sir, by spying upon my movements?”

“If you come to that, what do you mean by watching me?”

“I am not watching you—I have business here.”

“So have I.”

“How can that be ; I am about to drown myself in the river?”

“So am I !”

“Singular coincidence ! Why are you going to drown yourself?”

“I am a ruined man. I have lost everything—my name as a man of commercial honour will be stigmatised !”

“What an absurd reason ! Why, I should think there must be something very exciting and novel in the feeling of being ruined ?”

“Do not jest with me, sir ! I am desperate.”

“I am not jesting. Come, to show you I am in earnest, let us go and drown ourselves in company.”

“But why do you drown yourself ?”

“I find life an insufferable bore. I have tried everything except drowning and being ruined. I think it might interest me though, to hear your history before I die. Let me hear it !”

“It is very cold here for conversation. Come and sup at my house, and we will relate our histories, for I cannot consent to drown myself in your company until I am convinced you have just cause for so desperate an action.”

¹ “To be or not to be,” &c.

Another Bull-Fight

They adjourn to the merchant's house. The Englishman falls in love with his daughter. They drink a few bottles of *rom*. The Englishman keeps perfectly steady and melancholy, while the Biscayan gets very drunk. The result of course is, that the *milord* is struck with the idea of liquidating the bankrupt's liabilities, finds benevolence a new and delightful sensation worth living for, marries the Biscayan's daughter, and the piece ends happily and drily—at any rate not in the river.

The bull-fight I mentioned as in prospect, came off pretty well, but not brilliantly. The weather had been coldish, and the *ganado* (cattle) were sulky and truculent, instead of being brisk and furious, which is the most favourable as well as safest phase of taurine humour. They showed a disposition to be wary and false, running at the men rather than the gaudy draperies flourished in their faces to draw them.

The audience were not in good humour, especially some *aficionados* (amateurs) near us, who seemed greatly to disapprove of the performance of one of the *picadores*.

There was a very savage beast in the arena, who had made terrible havoc among the horses; and this *picador*, who had been the most unfortunate, was manifestly disheartened, and seemed divided in his mind whether to be more afraid of the bull below or the taunting remarks which rained upon his head from the indignant galleries.

His reputation was at stake, and I felt sorry for the poor fellow. He spurred his bleeding and disembowelled horse, and went to the charge apparently with an uncomfortable presentiment. The bull rushed at him with a tremendous impetus, which his lance was powerless to resist. The horns were plunged into the breast of the horse, who

Shorter than the Former

reared and fell backwards with his rider all of a heap. The *chulos* did not come readily enough to distract the bull's attention, and he trampled and gored his victim at leisure.

The wretches near us cried, "*Bravo toro—m'alegro*. It serves you rightly for pricking so badly." But when the *picador* was taken up senseless, with his face covered with blood, and carried round on a shutter, they, thinking he would probably die shortly, reconsidered the poor man's feelings a little, and how unpleasant it must be to perish in the hour of his ill success, in the midst of outcries and execrations on his want of skill and courage; so they changed their cries of *m'alegro* for "*Que lastima!*" (what a pity), a mildish reparation under the circumstances.

The whole affair, from beginning to end, was infinitely more bloody and horrid than anything in the sample at Seville, which I remember describing with tolerable accuracy. It has quite satisfied us that bull-fights are not to our taste, and we never intend to go again. One of the bulls had a marked objection to fight, though he was strong and active, as plainly appeared, by his jumping over the barrier (about six feet high) five times in rapid succession. However, when he found he could not get away, he fought bullfully.

There was another bull-fight yesterday, in which two men were killed. All Madrid is saying, "*Que lastima!*" about it to-day. They say the bulls are in a very exceptionally-dangerous frame of mind this season.

It is bedtime, and I must end this letter, which you will think a very short and shabby one, though it covers a closely-written sheet of letter-paper. But the gigantic proportions of my ordinary *paquets* must have distended your capacities of letter-reading to an exorbitant pitch.

Madrid

What a sum they must cost you in postage ; for here letters to England cannot be paid for. Your delicate foreign letter-paper sheets cost me about three shillings ; but my revenge is something terrible to think of. If we come back alive from Cuenca, you shall have a ponderous account of our expedition.

Ever, &c.

P.S.—As we have breakfasted earlier than we need have done, and the Cuenca diligence does not set off till noon, I have time to spare ; so I have determined to cover my letter with another half-sheet, and write a postscript on it about Madrid.

It is a vaguish affair to have to squeeze a whole capital into a postscript ; but I have no time to individualise, and a postscript on something in general will follow well enough after a letter about nothing particular.

Madrid is built in a roundish square, with a wall and boulevard squaring the circle. On the western brow of the plateau is the palace, which has some handsome rooms in it. We saw a very good copy of Murillo's best picture (in the Madrid gallery) hung in the palace, and thinking it might be a duplicate of the artist himself, learnt it was a copy by the queen.

Next door to the palace is the great armoury. Here we saw the swords and suits of many heroes of high fame, and exquisite workmanship. It made me wish I had lived in those times, that I might have inlaid myself a suit of black steel with silver patterns of my own device. The Christian patterns showed a paucity of invention ; but the Moorish were good in device, though I think not so graceful in form. The armour of Boabdil is very nicely inlaid. But what do you care about bosses and borders, and jewel-hilted rapiers ?

Statue of Cervantes

About as much as I do about bonnet-ribbons, and *ruches*, and mother-of-pearl-handled parasols !

Now we will skip, if you please, to the north-east corner of the city. Here is the famous *Prado*. *Prado* means meadow ; and this *pleasaunce* is so called, because there is not an inch square of grass. It is all boscaje, cut into ten thousand pieces by gravel-walks—making a pleasant labyrinth to wander and make love,—with stone seats. The broad walk up the centre is lined by immense numbers of the largish-sized kings, and princes, and queens, from Wamba and his lady downwards. There are reservoirs of muddyish water, and ducks and geese.

Returning, we cross the *Paseo*, a noble avenue, where, as by the Serpentine,—

Smooth-trundling fashion courts, in cushioned ease,
A dusty freshness from the evening breeze.

On the other side, crowning the slight rise of the fan-shaped *boca-calle* (street-mouth) of the Carrera San Hieronymo, stands the statue of Cervantes, which, though quite modern, is the thing which pleases me most in Madrid ; not because it is particularly good, but because the nation has attempted to do justice, at last, to her long-neglected son. On the pedestal is graven “AL PRINCIPE DE LOS INGENIOS ESPAÑOLES” (To the chief of Spanish wits). I wish he could have seen it before he died. He must often have walked over the place. Ford’s excellent joke, “To him whom his country refused bread while living, they have at last given a stone,” is unfortunately not exact. The statue is a bronze. His country, by way of posthumous charity, have presented him with a copper.

CHAPTER XXVII

CUENCA, *May 1.*

WE set off at twelve in the *banqueta* at the top of the diligence. After a tedious day of barren, uninteresting country, a still more tedious night came on. We luckily had it to ourselves, and tossing up for choice of places, disposed ourselves, Harry under foot, below the leather apron, and I along the seat.

The relative advantages were nearly balanced. He had more shelter from the wind; I had a hard leather seat instead of a bare foot-board to lie upon. It grew colder and colder. The wind whistled and howled in the cabriolet-head, whose leather curtains, as a matter of course, would not meet by full two feet.

I did something temporary with my silk pocket-handkerchief, tying it at the corners to stop the gap. It sagged in like a bellying sail, and the cold air blew in through it as if it was a sieve, and only let the most rarified and piercing particles pass. Harry, in a melancholy sleepy voice from below, said that it acted as a wind-sail, and turned the draught down below decks.

We were in our Madrid dresses, and had not brought our *capas* (mine, indeed, was in the neighbourhood of Jaen, but I might have brought my plaid). I can't think how we could have been so stupid; but at our outset there was

Clarence a Little Altered

a fine blazing noonday sun, and we thought our great-coats would be enough.

“Oh, Lord! methought, what pain it was to starve!” I was sleepy too, to add to my torments, and could not doze three minutes together without being awakened by the cold or the jolting. At last the day began to break, but the light made it no warmer; and even when the broad red sun slanted over the dark masses of Cuenca among the hills, he seemed powerless.

However, in half an hour or so his genial beams began to tell. The postilion, who had ridden all night, beginning to feel more comfortable, fell asleep. These poor wretches, who have to ride three or four hundred miles on end without stoppage of more than two hours, would be badly off if they could not sleep a little in the saddle. This boy would have to go all the way to Valencia. It is the same in Seville diligences, which have a still longer distance.

I had made this wonderful functionary's acquaintance (when we stopped at Tarancon) while he ate his beefsteak and smoked. He was a sinewy stolid youth, who seemed to possess no particular forte besides his long endurance in the saddle, and, indeed, such a course of life is enough to turn both body and soul into leather. I should have said that he was more tough than witty.

The near approach to Cuenca is pretty; a corner of the town rises on the rock-edge beyond a picturesque bridge. Crossing the river, we entered a long, broad street in the lower town, which is commonplace enough. Here the diligence stops to breakfast at the *Parador de la Diligencia*; and as Old Cuenca (the high town) is very imperfectly seen from this street, many people, who only stop to breakfast, must go away with the impression that the place is nothing very remarkable. They only see the round end

Cuenca

of the rock-perched city, where it fans out and sweeps down into the level. They see nothing, or at best only a passing glimpse of the least-striking corner of those precipitous rock-walls, crowned with quaint buildings, which overhang the deep ravines on either side. But of this and more anon.

At the moment, we neither knew nor much cared about such things, but rushed into the *Parador*, where our first thought was to warm ourselves at a blazing cedar-log fire, whose ambrosial warmth soon tempered our principal grievance to a level where our second thought could thrust up its head. Of course, the second thought was breakfast. The third thought was a cigar, in combination with a saunter in search of the picturesque.

We were in a more hopeful state of mind now ; in the sunshine, after a decent meal of poached eggs and chocolate ; but still we felt prepared to be disappointed, after coming eighteen hours' journey merely to see it. However, we had not come so far without excellent testimonials to the meritorious features of the place ; Stirling, before I left England, Gayangos in Madrid, and Ford in the Hand-book, were all eloquent in its praise ; and their collective opinion on any *cosa de España* is probably better worth having than that of any other three men living. Still Ronda stuck in our gizzard, for a disappointed tourist is suspicious of commended cities. I think the scalded dog in the proverb would hardly recognise himself in this genteel and somewhat diluted paraphrase.

A street at right angles to the one in which the *Parador* stands, whose houses were mostly in ruins, led us to the foot of the city. Instead of entering the gate at the bottom of the hill, we turned to the right up the narrow, deep ravine, over which the quaint, irregular crowd of narrow, many-storied buildings impend, as if they had been jostled

Siesta al Fresco

and elbowed by the press to the very edge of the dizzy verge, and were propping themselves up, as a temporary but desperate shift, with jutting heels and stanchions of timber.

Along this deep cleft ripples the crystal Huecar, whose stream we ascended till we came to an obstruction of rocks near a water-mill. Managing to scramble over our difficulty, we proceeded along the winding ravine, while at every angle fresh views broke upon us, and at each step we were more and more delighted and astonished with the ever-varying wonders of this truly enchanted city.

A little further on appeared the noble but dilapidated bridge, 150 feet high, spanning the chasm of the Huecar. Of course the next thing was to get upon the bridge. The view of the chasm, on either hand, is very striking. The time-worn edges of the precipices have fallen into curious forms. Huge detached crag-heads stand out against the sky-line ; the predominant type of these rocks bears some resemblance to the form of an anvil, probably a Vulcanic formation. Here, on the bridge, we were arrested by a distant plaintive murmur of cathedral music from above, and we climbed into the town. After taking a glance at the Cathedral, and trying the Post-office in the faint hope of a letter, we descended by the steep, narrow street to our *Parador*.

It was now about twelve ; but as we had begun the day on arriving at six in the morning, and besides had never satisfactorily finished our night, we thought something to eat and a *siesta* might suit our case better than further investigations for the present. Harry retired to his mattress ; and I, thinking it would be pleasanter to sleep *al fresco*, resorted once more to the ravine.

It now became a matter of speculation where to find a warm sequestered place, which did not seem so easy as I

My Dream

had expected. At our first entry, about seven in the morning, the glen had been nearly a monopoly, but now the grassy banks of the Huecar were occupied by a promiscuous array of washerwomen, kneading, and dipping, and clapping a great variety of tawdry rags.

I saw nothing for it but to climb the precipice to secure some inaccessible place of refuge ; and about 200 feet above the level of the stream, I lighted on a little grassy ledge, before the mouth of a small cave. Here, by disposing my head towards the cave, and my feet to the precipice, I could—

“ Sans souci du réveil,
Dormir, la tête à l'ombre et les pieds au soleil.”

I lit a *cigarillo* with my burning-glass, and shortly went to sleep, while the distant music of the cathedral still murmured its plaintive lullaby.

Shall I tell you my dream ? Methought (what would a dream be worth, if it did not begin with methought ?) as I lay in the mouth of the cavern, a distant trumpet's silver tones called to me from within. I rose and entered, leaving the light of day. Spell-bound, without the power to stop and hesitate whether I should proceed or return, I went down the steep declivity. The slope of the cavern's floor was rough and rocky, but my feet seemed lightened and guided by some onward destiny.

A strange, dim twilight grew upon the dark—a deep purple light, which as it increased, the mysterious impulse urging me forward seemed to strengthen, and I found myself plunging down from crag to crag at a desperate speed, leaping over great yawning gaps of apparently impossible width.

And yet I felt no fear—only a sort of dumb and dreamy wonder. I could see, as I flew across them, that beneath these abysses there flowed a dark torrent, breaking in foam

Pandemonium

that flashed phosphorically, like the foam before the prow of a great ship plunging through a midnight sea ; only that the thousand sparkles scattered from this black surge were as large and bright as Venus in her perigee.

It was their lustre which made the growing twilight of the cavern, which I could now see arched vaster than before, and made a larger, hollower echo to the roaring stream below. At length, when I was beginning to feel weary and my heart was sinking, I came to a hopeless breadth of chasm, whose further verge rose perpendicular to the top of the cavern. The light of the whirling gulf below showed me, beneath its wall, an arch through which the tide was sucked with a dreadful gurgling tumult.

I could not pause. I cried, The end is come—now we shall see what lies behind the veil. I did not fear—a madness possessed alike my heels and brain. I sprang—a hissing plunge—a bubbling tumult of waters, and I felt myself washed like a feather through this infernal mill-race, expecting every moment (though with an unaccountable complacency) to have my head split on some jutting rock.

Before my breath was quite exhausted (for from habit I had filled my lungs before plunging in), I was rolled out into the bosom of a broad, calm river, where I could swim at leisure. It was twilight still ; but I was now beneath a broad, calm, starlit heaven—but it was not the same heaven, nor the stars I knew. It seemed as vast, but not transparent—a solid dome, in which greater stars were swung like lamps, for their beams were reflected as it were on a polished vault of lapis lazuli.

This great vault's rim, like that of an inverted bowl, seemed to rest on the brow of that lofty mountain-barrier, beneath whose precipitous wall the placid river wound, and from whose base spouted—through a round aperture, like a

Liquid Fire

huge sewer-mouth—the sparkling torrent which had brought me down.

On the further side of the broad river, I saw a tall fountain of rosy fire, beneath what appeared a temple, whose great columns seemed to tremble as the flickering fountain rose and fell. I knew at once that this was my destination, and I swam towards the beacon, breaking the warm, dark waters into sparkling ripples, as I struck out lustily for the undiscovered shore.

The quality of the water seemed strange. It had an ambrosial perfume, unlike anything I have smelt with waking nostrils : and so far from exhausting or chilling, it gave a sort of prickly, burning glow and vigour to the body. Indeed, my frame appeared to undergo a change as I swam. At last I reached the bank—a shore of shelving flowers, which seemed like violets set with a self-luminous dewdrop in the centre. In the midst of the perfume of these sweet flowers, I perceived a smell of burning.

Startled and rather alarmed, I found that all my clothes were in a smouldering state, smoking slightly, and dimly luminous. I hurriedly began to undress, but at the first touch the whole fell off like a husk of tinder ; and I cast the consuming heap into the water, where it shot up a small dull flame. This floated away in the languid current of the river, and soon disappeared.

I found I had been swimming in a kind of liquid fire, which luckily had the property of respecting flesh and blood. I lay down and rolled, like a horse relieved of his trappings, in the soft and fragrant crush of jewel-spangled flowers. A drowsiness fell upon me ; I might have slept, when I was roused by the same trumpet call, not faint as before, but ringing a shrill clear note that echoed up to the dark blue vault, and seemed to make the stars that hung there tremble.

Limited Conversation

I started, and wading up the slope knee-deep in flowers, and leaving a lustrous line where my footsteps had shaken the fiery dew, I soon reached the gate of the temple I had seen. It was like some of the great gateways you have seen in Layard's Nineveh, only on the two huge granite blocks on either side couched living winged bulls with ghastly, solemn human faces.

These rolled their large fiery eyes and fixed them on me ; still I advanced, drawn towards the rosy fountain of flame which sprang from the black marble threshold, and shut the whole portal as with a broad curtain of fire.

As my feet touched the first step of the great black marble flight, both these beasts rose slowly and spread their wide wings across the entrance, and looking down upon me with a very sinister expression, spoke in an awful voice which sounded like the roaring of a mighty furnace. The one on the right hand said—

“MENE-MENE !”

And the one on the left hand—

“TEKEL UPHARSIN !”

The beasts were probably aware that the phrase they thus cut in two was all I should probably understand of the Assyrian tongue, and so made the most of it. I replied at once to the beast on the right hand—

“WAALEYCOM ESSALAM,”

And to the one on the left—

“BISMILLAHIRRAHMAN IRRAHIM ;”

The Fiery Veil

which pious and polite salutations seemed to strike them with a terrible horror, for a pang of torture twitched the solemn features, and they trembled violently, making a rustling sound with their quivering pinions, like the rustling of a great palm-tree when the simoon is on the desert.

Beneath these awful wings I stood and watched the flame. It sunk a little, and left a space of darkness at the top of the doorway, in which the sparks hovered like stars in the mirror of a flowing river. These star-like sparks were gathered like wild geese in the sky, and fell into the form of successive characters one after another.

𐤀
𐤁
𐤂
𐤃

When it came to the *Lamed*, no more letters were formed, and the flame rose to the top of the doorway again. I was aware that the word which had been spelt means ENTER in the Chaldaic.

It seemed a dangerous enterprise to go into this flaming fiery furnace, but I remembered the quality of the water, and had an impression that I was someway seasoned against burning; moreover, the trumpet sounded again behind the veil, and in I dashed, not without a vague suspicion that I might be converting myself into a dish of broiled bones to make a meal for some winged-lion fiend inside.

I got safe through, however, without a hair of my head being singed, and found myself in a vast circular court, crystal-floored and surrounded by a lofty peristyle of gleaming golden columns. In the centre, a great fountain cast up a glowing volume of what seemed like molten silver.

The Spirit of Sleep

Below was a broad golden basin, sunk in the floor, in which the falling fluid tumbled and seethed as molten silver does in the primrose heat of a crucible. Before the fountain, on an ebon throne, sat a swarthy giant with dark folded wings ; he was crowned and zoned with gold, and in his hand he held a golden trumpet, which, as I entered, he raised to his lips ; but just as I was preparing to be effectually deafened, I heard a gentle dreamy voice from behind the fountain call my name.

I passed the giant's throne, and going round the fountain, saw that in a channel flowing from the central basin a shadowy shallop rocked upon the glowing stream.

It was not moored, and would have drifted away through an arch opposite my entrance, but on its prow there stood a dark maiden with a silver paddle, with which she kept its head against the current. Her eyelids drooped, her form was beautiful, but dark as night, and darker still than night the flowing hair contrasted with the loosely flowing robe of snowy white ; and robe and hair floated around her listless arms, she stooping down upon her weary toil.

She said, nor raised her eyes, "I wait for thee. Come !" And I entered and sat down ; and she sat down beside me, and said, "I am weary," and threw her languid arms around me, and pillowed her drowsy head upon my shoulder, and clothed me with her wealth of raven tresses.

Meanwhile, our boat sprang forward through the arch—away—down the rapid stream of fire.

But where we came to at last, and what we saw by the way, I will not relate, at least for the present, for fear of being tedious ; for I am tired of relating my dream, and there is a hopeless quantity more of it, enough, indeed, if I told it now, to smother the whole description of Cuenca and its environs.

Huecar and Jucar

Therefore, with your permission, I shall abruptly wake at once.

On getting up, and shaking my clothes and faculties into their proper places, I found my seclusion had not been so perfect as I supposed. A knot of soldiers had gathered on a path-ledge of the opposite side of the glen (which, though so deep, was only fifty or sixty yards across), who seemed to be pointing me out and observing on my motions, as if they considered me some troglodyte animal, in a grey frieze coat, who had crept out of the caverns to bask in the sunshine.

I descended from my rocky perch, and retracing my steps to where the Huecar debouches from its chasm, crossed the foot of the town, and wandered up the Jucar glen at the other side. This is as abrupt and striking as the former, but a thought wider, and watered by a much more copious stream: at first a deep dark-green mirror reflecting the crag-perched city which overhangs it, but higher up it boils and whirls among protruding rocks and in deep pools.

By the northern margin of the stream, a charming wooded and swarded walk beneath the precipice led me to a wooden bridge, after crossing which I still kept on following the other bank, under the impression that some path would shortly occur to lead me back to the town. I found none, and came to the conclusion that the two glens must meet further up, and so went along still as far as that idea would support my patience. When I had come in sight of some gardens beneath the cliff, and perceived that the glen turned rather the wrong way, as the day was now hot and nobody in sight, I undressed, and bathed in a clear whirling pool.

Being now refreshed and cool, it struck me that it would

A Scramble

be a humiliating alternative to turn back. I therefore adopted the imprudent, but exciting course, of scaling the precipice directly opposite the spot which I had accidentally come to. It looked very pretty climbing, but on experiment I found it difficult to make a start up the first perpendicular twenty or thirty feet, which was so ticklish work that it effectually cut off my retreat; for as one has not any eyes in one's heels, it is much more difficult to climb down than up. I therefore, as in prudence bound, now launched in my difficulty, crawled slowly and carefully up a wrinkle in the rock's face.

It was all so hazardous for three hundred feet or so, that the slightest slip would have rolled me away to perdition. I began to be seriously alarmed, for I felt sure that if I came to actual impossibilities further up, I should very improbably be able to get down again alive. I was especially afraid of a great tuft of brambles which blocked up my wrinkle, and was very hard to get over. My footing was not improved in safety by my having on an old pair of dress-boots which had danced through a season on the polished floors of the metropolis, and were very slippery-soled. But it is no use to try to make one's own dangers exciting in the narration. Like all other narrators of hair-breadth escapes, I got to the top, the reaching of which, I assure you, caused me a very pleasurable sensation.

There certainly is a luxury in danger. The mind enjoys excitement too much to be particular as to whether the excitement is for the moment pleasurable or painful. I certainly don't think it is a pleasant sensation to be afraid; and yet I know by experience, that since the time when I could walk across a gate, whether there was anybody to look on or not, it has always been a sort of instinct with me to do those things which engender fear.

Luxury of Danger

The suspense, while you are in the scrape, is perhaps about evenly balanced by the consciousness of skill which wrestles with the difficulty ; but when one is fairly through, one congratulates one's self so cordially, and common earth seems such a luxury to one's feet ; besides a certain rebellious triumph over the detracting whisper of Prudence, who certainly has the best of the argument, when to Rashness making the boast, " I have done it ! " she answers—" Yes ! but you had no business to try."

But how very flat the world would be if one only did what one has any business to do. I never had such a climb since a pleasant precipice at Niagara, nine years ago, when I was seventeen, and had very near as much of the better part of valour as at present.

Now that I was at the top, I sat down on the edge of a broad mass of rock overhanging the precipice, which fell away about 200 feet in a plumb-line. Between this and another similar rock-head was the fissure, whose irregularities of surface had been the rounds of my ladder. Below lay huge lumps, forty or fifty feet square, which had fallen off the brow in ages past.

In the narrow glen below, the edges of the precipice on either side had formed the horizon : but from the height to which I had climbed, I now saw that from the brow above the abrupt crags, sloped back a considerable forehead of rugged mountain, sprinkled with great boulder-stones, many of which had apparently rolled down to the very verge, and been hesitating for centuries whether to go over or not. The foamy Jucar roaring through its rocks, 500 feet below me, made a pleasant solemn murmur in the still windless abyss, which began to darken down below, as the sun declined towards the mountain-flank.

When the blood is heated, and the mind excited

Las Piedras Encantadas

by climbing, you enjoy the beauties of scenery much more than when a steamboat or a diligence carries you lazily by.

After I had made the most of these sensations and reflections, and taken my breath, with a slight admixture of tobacco-smoke, I crossed the narrow neck of the rock-isthmus, and looked back upon the city, and down upon the Huecar glen, from a brow of the precipice which we had seen from the bridge. We had remarked the spot from the appearance of something like a ruined building in the face of the rock, though in the distance we could not assure ourselves that it was not one of the fantastic natural formations in which these very singular crags abound. It turned out to be the front wall of the lower story of a house built down a chip in the edge of the cliff, which tenement, having probably tottered on the brink to an extreme old age, had at length fallen over.

Returning to the *Parador*, I found Harry had returned from making a sketch in the Huecar glen.

While he was sketching, a man had come up, and entered into conversation with him about the picturesque, who said that Cuenca was nothing compared with another place in the hills, about three leagues off, called *Las Piedras Encantadas* (the enchanted stones). The name struck our fancy, and we resolved to go, being not at all discouraged by the dissuasion of a man at the *Parador*, who said it was a bad place—*nada digna de verse* (nothing worth seeing)—only rocks and pine-trees.

The director of the diligence, a polite *caballero*, whose bureau is in the *Parador*, and who fraternised with us at breakfast, informed us that Piedras Encantadas was a nice place in a *paisage muy lindo* (pretty scenery), also that there were good shooting and fishing. Our best way, he said,

Means of Conveyance

would be to find some of the Val de Cabras people, who come down daily with loads of firewood, and they would take us back for a trifle on their discharged mules. We dined, and went to bed early, in consideration of our last night's want of sleep in the diligence.

CHAPTER XXVIII

NEXT morning, after breakfast, we went out, accompanied by the polite diligence-director. In the market-place of the high town he stopped two sturdy damsels, browned and blowzed as to their complexions, with dark flowing tresses and sparkling eyes. These maidens were leading a long string of mules and asses charged with faggots. They agreed to call for us at two o'clock, and carry us back to Val de Cabras.

In the mean time we continued our walk. Passing through the gate of the ruined fortress which guards the narrow neck of the rock-plateau, and forms the upper entrance into Cuenca, we turned to the left, and found a winding-path which led us down into the glen of the Jucar. Here we bathed, and on our return at two o'clock found the damsels with their *caballerias* waiting in the court of the *Parador*.

We entreated them in vain to allow us to give them something to drink. They had three mules and a donkey tied in a string. I mounted the first, and Harry the second. The tallest and comeliest of our *arrieras* took the halter of mine,—the other brought up the rear with a switch, to encourage loiterers to keep up their pace. In this peculiar sort of procession we passed along the great street, emerged from the town where we first entered it in the diligence, turned down below the arches of the bridge, and followed the banks of Jucar.

Order of March

When we had got some little way beyond my bathing-place of the morning, and a bend in the ravine had shut out the last of the towering heights of Cuenca, our young ladies thought fit to dissolve the tie which bound us, and we were permitted to direct and manage our several animals as best we could by admonitory flicks over the head and ears with our halter-ends. Thus we threaded our way, riding two and two (for our fair guides had also mounted) along the narrow path, winding in and out among the huge masses of fallen rocks between the echoing precipice and the murmuring river.

I rode by the side of my original conductress. Some introductory conversation ensued. Her name was Facunda ; the other was not her sister, but her cousin,—she was called Casta. They did not live in the same house,—Casta lived over the way. Casta's house was a *posada*—not a regular *posada*, but guests could be received. She was not married, nor would confess a *novio* (sweetheart). She had not yet been told her eyes were beautiful, nor was altogether prepared to believe it now.

We overtook other villagers, and our cavalcade soon amounted to about forty animals—horses, mules, and asses, —mostly mounted by young women and little girls. There were, however, two old women, a man, and two boys. The party reached these final dimensions when, about a league from Cuenca, the glen widened out into a fair green valley. Here the driving of those beasts which were not mounted caused some diversion, and some of the young ladies fell off now and then in the pursuit of perversicacious donkeys who diverged into the green barley.

It was a merry party, and we rode promiscuously among them, saying all the fine things we could make intelligible—and, indeed, more ; for their language was a rough country dialect, and they could not keep up with our florid classical

Val de Cabras

style of complimentary dialogue, which was principally modelled on Don Quixote's conversations with princesses and shepherdesses. Nevertheless, they took it all as a compliment, and laughed as much as if they understood all our best jokes and sublimest metaphors.

There was none of the party who, in my eyes, eclipsed the charms of my original Facunda ; but Harry, I am sorry to say, proved faithless to his Casta, who being mounted on a slow donkey, rather lagged behind : but I did not see that he bettered himself greatly ; and, indeed, to say the truth, any three of the whole party might have sat for the portraits of those *feas aldeanas* † whom Sancho persuaded his master to believe beauteous princesses.

The road now turned to the right, and leaving the broad valley of the Jucar, entered a narrow, picturesque defile, watered by a smaller tributary stream. Great pines, which had planted themselves in the clefts and ledges of its rocky walls, waved their dark arms overhead, and here and there the surrounding mountains lifted their lofty eaves into our narrow-bounded horizon.

The ravine widened, and along the expanding valley we caught a glimpse of Val de Cabras through the pines. Our party's spirits rose higher and higher as they approached their hearths and *ollas* ; and the motley rout, amid much clatter of tongues, and laughter, and snatches of songs, entered the little village about sunset.

Casta had assured us that her house was amply provided with all things ; but we knew the specious *hay de todo* (there is of everything) too well, and insisted on the maiden's taking a dishful of cold mutton-chops from the *Parador*. These had been wrapped in a rag, and stowed in their *alforjas*, and they came in well at our supper ; for the house only possessed

† Ugly villageresses.

The Hon. Robert Dundas Murray

eggs and salad, though there were immense quantities of handsome pots and pans hanging in burnished array round the kitchen.

Our hostess was obliging and unsophisticated, but garrulous to an extent that impeded the supper.

“So you are countrymen of Don Roberto? Don Roberto dwelt here for some weeks. Probably these gentlemen have been recommended to our house by Don Roberto. Señores, are you acquainted with Don Roberto?”

“*Caramba! Señora huespeda, quien sabe* (who knows)? Will you please to be quick with the salad? There are at least five hundred thousand Don Robertos in England *uno mas inconocido que otro* (one more unknown than the other); and unless you know his other name, *como se puede averiguar* (how can it be verified)?”

“His worship’s *apellido* (surname) was *Duendas*, was it not, Pedrillo?” referring to her nephew, who sat smoking in the corner. “Pedrillo, gentlemen, guided his worship about the country; and who knows but he would have taken Pedrillo back to England, only Pedrillo would not leave his *novia* (sweetheart)?”

“Yes, he was called Don Roberto Duendas de Monroy, and I used to go with him to fish and shoot. Don Roberto was *muy aficionado a la caza* (a great sportsman), and carried an *escopet* (musket) of the richest, with two strokes.”

“Don Roberto was *buen mozo* (a handsome youth),” continued the landlady, “*muy guapo y liberal* (very pretty and generous); we all loved him, and were sorry when he went away; and we love all Englishmen for his sake.”

“If you love *us*, don’t talk so much, most affable of hostesses, but use your endeavours to bring the supper to a

Evening Party and Morning Call

head, for, *mira Vmd.* (look you), while your tongue is dancing our teeth are standing still."

"*Cachaza, hijo* (patience, my son) ; *pierda Vmd. cuidado* (may your worship be relieved of solitude)." And then she would return to her chattering about Don Roberto.

During the interval before supper was ready, the fair Facunda paid us a visit, and said that she hoped we should be comfortable, and that her house was at our disposition whenever it pleased us to honour it. I said I would do myself the honour of paying her an evening visit after supper. She sat there knitting a stocking, and, by way of diversion, I knitted a few rounds, which created a proper degree of astonishment. When she departed, I told stories to the children about little boys lost in the mountains, and distressed by lions, and tigers, and wild bulls, and rescued by fairies in winged cars drawn by *media docena mariposas* (half a dozen butterflies) : but at last the supper was ready. We ate ravenously, and immediately after became very sleepy over our pipes. Harry judiciously went to bed at once ; but I, with a lingering intention of going to pay my visit over the way, if I could wake up enough at any future period, dozed in the chimney-corner till it was too late, and then waking up, wrote my journal, and went to bed.

Next morning, Sunday, we had arranged to ride up to the Piedras Encantadas, a league up among the hills ; but after breakfast, while the mules were being caught, which caused an unforeseen delay, I went and made a morning call over the way.

The beauteous Facunda was dressed for mass, and was coiffing her little sisters for the same occasion. It was an irregular, dark interior, with nooks and chimney-corners something like a Highland bothy, only larger. In one corner of the chimney lay an old bedridden grandsire, to

Abou-Kizeb Again

whom I presented a cigar. After a while Casta came to say the mules were ready, and we set off, accompanied by the old *posadero* and Facunda's father.

Riding along the valley, we came to a zig-zag path, by which we ascended the mountain. Facunda's father attended me. He was a striking, picturesque man, with long black hair curling down to his shoulders. A broad and nobly-cut brow, fringed with shaggy eyebrows, overhung serious, deep-set eyes. He was dressed in black sheepskin. Altogether his appearance was calculated to produce a sensation on the Adelphi boards in the character of an unfortunate monarch in the disguise of a shepherd.

I naturally supposed he would be a character of some sort, and took pains to beat about for original sayings and local traditions; but I could get nothing out of him. He was not sulky, but simply dull, and afforded one more confirmation to the axiom, that "appearances are often deceitful."

Finding I could elicit nothing, out of benevolence to future travellers who might make the same inquiries, I thought fit to lay the foundations of a tradition myself. So I told him that the *Piedras Encantadas* were mentioned in an ancient manuscript, *Las Cronicas de los Reyes Moros*, written in the Arabic language by *el sabio* Abou-kizeb.

By this account it appeared, that a certain sultan, called *Fâseq el Mesquin*, reigned very wickedly over a tract of country from Catalayud to Albacete, and from Tuejar to Guadalajara.

This malignant potentate was favoured and abetted in his cruelty and crimes by certain evil spirits called *chinnes* and *âfritos*, who constructed for him a magnificent city of palaces and towers, and *alcazares*, with prisons and deep

The Christian Sultana

dark dungeons underground, where he kept many of his oppressed subjects in great torture and anguish. He had many wives and an immense miscellaneous seraglio. One of his favourite slaves was a captive Christian lady, the daughter of a knight in Burgos, and affianced to a *caballero muy principal* of Valencia.

On her journey thither, she had been taken. From her virtues and prudence she soon acquired a considerable influence over Fâseq; so much so that his principal astrologer and ambassador at the court of the powers of darkness grew jealous of her, and began to entertain serious fears that she might convert the wicked old man, in his dotage, to become a Christian. What the astrologer cared for more than this, was the danger that her son Cuenc el Sâlahyn might be named successor to the sultanic divan.

Cuenc was the favourite son of the old king, and it was strongly suspected that his mother (called Abiadah by the Moors, though her real name was Blanca) had made him a Christian already. Indeed, it is now ascertained that she prayed daily during her pregnancy to the blessed Virgin that no pagan might be born of her.

Cuenc was in every respect the reverse of his father, but the old man was proud of him, for he was the best horseman in the realm, and could throw a spear more than three hundred *varas* (so says the historian, whose statement, however, I can scarcely credit); besides which, he was so gentle and amiable, by the peculiar favour of the Virgin, that those who saw him could not help loving him.

The chief astrologer, dreading the ascendancy of the young prince, caused an *âfrito* to appear to the king in a bloody dream, holding a sword in one hand and a golden bowl of clotted blood in the other. He thus addressed the terrified old *pecador* in awful accents:—

A Catastrophe

“Choose, oh king! Here is thy sword to slay. Here is thine own gore to spill. Treachery lurks within thy doors; and a son of thy loins, whom thou least suspectest, goeth about to slay thee. I may not tell thee his name. But he warned—farewell.”

The cunning astrologer, Arif el Cauâqueb, had justly calculated on the cruel disposition of King Fâseq. He, without more ado, not knowing which of his sons might be the culprit, slew them all. But the Virgin, who had not been idle during these diabolical transactions, sent a messenger to Abiadah, in a dream simultaneous with the king's, warning her to fly with her son; which she accordingly did before daybreak, and came to a cave in the rocks between the Jucar and the Huecar, which were then bare and solitary, without any habitation of man.

The king, with his astrologer, was preparing to search the whole region, when the vengeance of Heaven overtook them. It rained a shower of flame on the wicked city, which smelted the very stones together, sealing up Fâseq and Arif, with all their infamous company of evil spirits, in the molten ruins. But yet it is said that one may trace the lines of the streets running between great masses of crumbling rock which seem to have been blocks of building.

As to Cuenc and his mother, after this catastrophe, they gathered their subjects together and built the city of Cuenca on the rock beneath which they had taken shelter in their flight.

“I never yet heard this history,” said my companion, “and it seems indeed too strange to be credible; but in some points it is verisimilar, for the lines of the streets may be traced, and it is sometimes called the *Ciudad encantada*, from its resemblance to the form of a city.”

La Ciudad Encantada

About half-way up the zig-zag path by which we were ascending the mountain, there was a huge block of stone which had fallen from the impending cliff. It was something like the size and shape of a great whale, about sixty feet long, and twenty-five high in the round of its back. We inquired about it, and the old *posadero* said that it was called the *pedra de las almas*, because it had fallen at the vesper-time of *las almas*. It fell in the year 1797, and he remembered the tremendous noise it made in the glen. He was a lad at the time, and was out with his father cutting wood.

On the top of the hill we entered a large pine forest, among which, here and there, great rocks began to appear ; and at length we reached an open space, beyond which stood several heavy-headed stones about thirty feet high, set upon narrow necks, and looking something like clumsy columns. Our guides told us this was the beginning of the enchanted city. We shortly entered it.

It is composed of long ranges of generally perpendicular rock, thirty or forty feet high, between which are narrow lanes of green closely-cropped sward. Sheep and shepherds are the city's only inhabitants. Here and there the lanes narrowed, and the leaning walls joined over-head like a rude gateway. Here and there, too, were heavy-headed projections from the walls, which bore some remote resemblance to clumsy Egyptian pilasters.

Still, after hunting up and down the grassy streets of the labyrinth for a spacious point of view, I found nothing which could pass, when drawn, for a street, in even the most ante-Cheopsean style of architecture. In hopes of a more extensive prospect, and being moreover stimulated by Harry's surmising that it could not be done, I climbed one of the rock walls, which being of a honey-combed, sponge-like surface

The Shepherd's Clock

afforded good hand and foot hold, though at the outset it leaned over a little, which gave the experiment a certain air of difficulty.

The tops are mostly of the same level, and were varied only by occasional pines and cedars lifting their heads above the alleys.

It would be an admirable place for pic-nics ; and the cool shady lanes seem made for loving loiterers to lose their way among, when pigeon-pie and champagne have a little obfuscated their notions of locality.

Emerging from the city, we met in the piny suburbs a venerable shepherd with flowing silver hair. His hut was near at hand, and as we were hungry, he gave us to eat of a sort of cake resembling the broad bakstones of Yorkshire. We in return presented him with *cigarillos*.

We wanted to know what time it was, and after a careful observation of the sun's altitude, he assured us with confidence it was half-past eleven. "Pues el cielo es su reloj, muy cuerdo tiene Vmd. su relojero, que no se engañen horoscopos de su hechura."*

On our return to Val de Cabras, we dined magnificently on a roasted kid, and a kind of fritters, made of crumbs moulded in little lumps with egg and sugar, fried in oil, and served with wine sauce. They were very good—better than our English sample of Spanish fritters. After dinner, Don Roberto's guide conducted us home to Cuenca, that he might bring back our mules. On our way we bathed in the Jucar where it enters the gorge, and arrived about sunset.

Next day we returned to Madrid in the interior of the diligence, which was nearly as much too hot as the *banqueta*

* Since the heaven is your dial, your worship has an excellent clockmaker ; for time-pieces of his workmanship are never out of order.

A Real Robbery

was too cold. But heat is the better fault of the two. One of our companions was a gay and voluble young Murcian, coming to Madrid to show his lately-married wife the wonders of La Corte. He told us many amusing stories; among others a history of his being robbed, which, as we have not been robbed ourselves, I will give you as a sample.

“*Pues, Señores*, the casualty was in this manner. We were a party of three. Our journey was towards Caravaca. One of my companions was the old *capataz* (factor) of a friend of mine. He was bringing up the rents of a small estate in the vicinity of Moratalla. We had one rusty old *escopet*, which was not loaded. But, to say the truth, we had no idea of being robbed. *Salta la liebre de donde menos se aspetaba* (the hare starts where she is least expected), and as we had just passed the river Segura, they leapt out of the bushes, and pounced upon us unawares.

“They were seven, all armed with muskets. We were only three. One an old man, myself a lad of seventeen, and the other a servant. There was no time for flight or resistance. ‘*Abajo!*’ they cried, and down we went, with our noses on the road. They rifled us of all we had worth taking, even to the *marsellès* jacket I wore. Indeed it was *algo vistoso* (rather smart), and had massive silver *broches* on it.

“After they had robbed us, they bound us hand and foot, and carried us into the bush. Here they threw us down, and held a consultation whether to kill us or not. I don’t know whether it was to frighten us and make us quiet, but one of them seemed very anxious to despatch us at once. *En resolucion*,* they determined to leave three men to watch us there till night. The other four decamped with our horses and the plunder. They were afraid to leave us,

* In the end.

The Sympathy of Smoke

though we were tied so tight, for fear some one might pass along the road, and, hearing our cries, come to the rescue. It was ten o'clock in the morning when we were attacked, and all through that long sultry summer day, they sat and watched us. Several times we heard passers-by within twenty yards of us; but our guard would have stabbed us at once if we had cried out. The cords cut my wrists painfully, and I was dying of thirst.

"I begged and prayed one of the robbers to loosen my wrists a little, but he refused. I entreated him, in the name of Christ, to get me a drink of water, for the river was not fifty yards off. He said, if I was not quiet he would make an end of me.

"At any rate, for the sake of the blessed Virgin, let me smoke something!" On this last piteous request the robber's heart relented, and he said,

"Quiere Vmd. puro u papel?" (will you have a cigar, or a *cigarillo*?)

"Tan a seca boca puro no se puede fumar" (with so dry a mouth cigars are not smokeable), I replied, and he set about making me a few *papeles*. Soon after sunset they left us. The servant at last got one hand loose, but his *navaja* was in the other pocket of his *calzones*, so that he could not get at it. I told him to roll towards me if he could, and he would be able to get at mine, which he accordingly did, and opening it with his teeth, cut us all clear of our bonds.

"The old factor was the worst off; he had hurt his face on some root or stump, when they threw him down; his head had got in a hole, and his legs were lying uphill, so that when we took him up he was speechless, and we thought he would have died. The robbers, doubtless, had private information. They got six hundred dollars by the day's work,

Madrid

besides our horses, and my *marsellès*, and about a dozen dollars from me."

"But were the robbers never caught?" we inquired.

"Oh, no! One of them I myself recognised by his voice, though I took good care not to let him see I did, or he would have made away with me on the spot."

"And did you not inform against him afterwards?"

"No! I thought it better not; for it would have been difficult to prove, and he was a very desperate character, who would have killed me as soon as a fat capon, if he had borne a grudge against me. Besides, I had not lost much—perhaps fifty dollars' worth altogether. It was not worth while to make a fuss about it, and run into danger."

"But, my dear sir, your friend's rents! the cause of public security!" &c., &c., in a long discourse on the deplorable moral result of an acquiescence in such disorders. It had not struck him that there was any immorality in being robbed.

We reached Madrid to-day at six in the morning, and went to bed at once by broad daylight. We got up and breakfasted at two. It is now night.

CHAPTER XXIX

SEGOVIA, *May 9.*

ON our way to London we determined to take the Escorial. Leaving Madrid, therefore, by the first gate we could find (that at the end of the Calle de Alcalá, Madrid's Piccadilly), we turned to the left and skirted the city walls, till we reached the pleasant avenues which line the margin of Manzanares.

Passing under a lofty triumphal arch, we bade farewell to the precincts of La Corte, and crossed the river by a bridge adorned with a few broken-nosed stone statues. Three or four hours' ride across a bare, bleak, undulating plain carried us out of sight of Madrid, which, being a city set on a hill, takes some little hiding, and looks well in the distance.

Turning the ridge of a low, dark range of hills, the huge grey masses and lofty spires of the Escorial appeared at the foot of its snow-sprinkled mountains on the other side of a broad, flat, wooded valley. From its great size it seemed nearer than it was, and the night fell before we reached the small town which has grown up in its vicinity.

The *Fonda* of Callisto Burgilios is a comfortable house, and there were stewed pigeons in the *olla*. We supped in the kitchen. Don Callisto, our host, judging, I suppose from our soiled and seedy *arriero* costume, that we were hawkers of some sort, asked us what we had to sell in the *alforjas*.

We disabused him of his error, telling him our usual

Escorial

story, that we were poor portrait-painters. But it struck me that it would be a good idea to keep up the impression of our being ignorant tramping vagabonds, by way of getting a few rises out of him, for he seemed an affable and jocose personage.

“Entrando en el pueblo, vimos un tal desaforado edeficio, que parece iglesia grandemente desigual conforme es pequeño el lugar. Pero quiza será convento u fábrica. Siempre mas se parece a un convento.” (Entering the place, we saw a whacking great building, which seems far too big a church for so small a town. But perhaps it is a convent, or a manufactory. However, it looks more like a convent than anything else.)

“*Hombre!*” he replied; “can it be possible that there is any one who has not heard of the Escorial, the eighth wonder of the world; if, indeed, it be not the first, and before all the other seven? The Escorial, which people come to see from the ends of the earth,—*Caramba!*”

“And pray what may Escorial mean, I have not before heard the word?”

“He who says *Escorial* says all; for there is more than a little of everything in it. Palace—church—convent—sepulchre. Philip the Prudent vowed it on the field of St. Quentin (where he conquered the French), and built it to be the pious retreat of his old age, and a tomb more stupendous than the pyramids (which are in Egypt, *señores*), for the bones of Catholic kings.”

“If this be the case, we had perhaps better delay our journey towards Segovia a few hours to-morrow morning, and take a look at this Escorial, *que segun dice Vmd. debe ser cosa muy linda, y digna de verse*” (which, from what your worship remarks, appears to be a thing fair and worthy to be seen).

The Blind Guide

“I have had the honour of receiving many distinguished guests, who have come from distant countries to visit the Escorial. The celebrated *Doomas* was here, and spoke *muy amistosamente* with me in this very kitchen. There was a large party with him. They insisted on cooking several dishes for themselves. They drank a considerable quantity of wine and were very lively. Afterwards they must needs get up a ball, and *Doomas* danced with my eldest daughter.”

Next morning at breakfast, a sound of shuffling steps, accompanied by frequent tappings of a staff along the passage, heralded the appearance of Cornelio, the celebrated blind guide of the Escorial. He seems to be about sixty, and has a mild, fat, vacant, uplifted, listening face. He seemed to consider it a matter of course that we should employ him, and so we did.

The tappings of his staff on the flag-stones soon awoke the echoes of a vast cloistered court, and a functionary appeared who conducted us by a back entrance up into the palace department of the edifice. Here the first thing which struck us was a quantity of the most brilliant-coloured tapestry we had ever seen. Indeed, most of the rooms are covered with it,—scenes from the chase, the battle-field, and bull-ring. One suite of apartments was illustrated with the adventures of Telemachus, as our usher informed us. After hearing a great deal about this worthy Ithacan, we thought on the strength of our costume we might ask for an historical commentary ; so I said—

“Pues quien era este Telemaco ? parece que fuese caballero muy principal en su tiempo ; es regular que era Español.” (After all, who was this Telemachus ? it seems he was a very considerable person in his day ; probably he was a Spaniard.)

“Que ! hombre, era Frances.” (“My dear sir,”—in a

Three English Sages

tone of expostulatory surprise at such an error—"he was a Frenchman.")

Happening to see three small Wedgewood porcelain busts of familiar faces on the chimney-piece, we inquired who they were.

"Tres filosofos Ingleses." (Three English philosophers.) "This," he said, pointing to Pope, "is the famous Chiquiper; this," pointing to Johnson, "is the wise Poppy; and this," laying his hand on Shakespeare's round forehead, "is the prudent Honsoon."

There was one set of rooms prettily decorated in marqueterie wainscot, by CARLOS IV., who himself worked at it. A cipher of his name is shown as the royal handiwork. All the door-handles and hardware fittings were of elaborate cut steel, inlaid with gold.

Philip II.'s bedroom—a dark, cold, uncomfortable cell as need be—is only separated by a glass-door from the vast and lofty church. We were made to sit down in its ante-chamber, on a straight-backed armchair and backless stool; and when thus seated opposite each other, were informed that here and thus sat Philip and his prime minister Olivarez. We were not so much affected by our unforeseen position as our conductor seemed to expect, only remarking, that if Philip and Olivarez had been informed that we were about to fill their places, they would probably have been more astonished and ashamed, than we were proud and delighted.

We now descended into the *sacristia*, where our blind man met us again; also a fat young man, and the *sacristano*, who conducted us all down into the *Panteon*, by a dark flight of steps, plunging into the entrails of the earth. The vault was not to be entered, the gates being closed during the lying in state of the little Prince of Asturias.

The Puff Interjectional

The *sacristano* lighted a line of candles, just within the gilded bars, which dimly lighted up this somewhat tawdry sepulchre. The poor little pocket-edition of *Catholic Majesty*, bound in crimson velvet and gold, suppressed so soon after publication, with the hot-pressed leaves of his kingly destiny uncut, lay on an altar-table in the middle of the vault, and afforded a topic of moralising speculation on his probable escape from many troubles. Around him, in their carved and gilded bins, reposed the ashes of his less fortunate ancestry, many of whom had better been buried in their first than in their second childhood. The sacristan pointed out the positions of various kings and queens; and I asked him, as we were about to depart, which receptacle was reserved for Isabella II.

“No se sabe todavia.” (It is not yet known.)

“Que importa?” (What does it matter?) said the fat young man in an irreverent tone of levity; “despues de la muerte, para mi todo es bueno” (after death, one place, as far as I am concerned, is as good as another).

“*Hombre!*” cried the sacristan, as he stooped down to blow out the row of candles within the grating, “you should not (puff) talk lightly (puff) in the presence of the sacred (puff) remains of their Catholic (puff) Majesties.”

The assertion of Death’s levelling republicanism by the fat young man, and the undignified official remonstrance of the wheezy little sacristan, as he stooped and puffed over his flaring and swealing candles,—contrasting so strangely with all that solemn gloom and visible darkness of funereal pomp,—awakened a sense of the ludicrous, much stronger than description can give an idea of; and we laughed with such irreverent heartiness, that I do not doubt but the old sexton (who laughed a little too himself) would ease his conscience by cursing us all for a set of blasphemous heretics.

St. Pablo not St. Paul

From the foundations we ascended to the summit of the pile, at least as high as could be reached, which was only the gallery round the dome: this, however, commanded a view of the gridiron-shaped building below, and the surrounding country, vast and grand, but not particularly beautiful; a dark, frowning range of mountains on the one hand, and the boundless plains of Castille on the other.

Our blind Cornelio pointed out different places in the horizon. He had shown a wonderful memory in conducting us through the labyrinth of narrow passages in the walls, and corkscrew staircases, telling us about each statue, as he came to its pedestal, when we emerged on the gallery within the dome. This is ornamented with great gilt statues of the Apostles, and he specially informed us that this St. Pablo was not the St. Paul of London, which he chuckled over as a most excellent joke for heretics of the Anglican persuasion. In the picture-galleries, however, where he had no corners and angles to guide himself by, and had to guess his distances, he usually pointed to one picture, and described the next.

In the church there are a great number of gigantic music-books, said to be written and illuminated by one monk. They are about four feet by three, each containing sixty or seventy leaves of vellum richly illuminated. One would not have thought a single individual's lifetime could have sufficed for such voluminously velluminous works. We also saw the library, where they showed us a manuscript Alcoran on vellum: and many other things we saw, which, if they were written in a book, it might be set up on a shelf of the Escorial library, and remain till called for. The fact is, we were weary of this great magnificently-ugly place before we had half done it, and were very glad when we were allowed by our guides to go away.

Fonda San Rafael

Riding to Guadarrama, we turned up the mountain, and had to ascend by the zigzag road to, I should think, about two thousand feet above the level of the plain. It was very cold towards the top, and there was here and there a patch or two of snow. We had been afraid to go by La Granja, as it was not known whether the road was passable for snow, that pass being much higher. There was a mighty rushing wind, very keen and piercing, which blew our cloaks about our ears in a manner very trying to our tempers.

There is nothing, perhaps, more annoying in the category of grievances incident to clothing, than the disposal of a vast mass of heavy drapery on a gusty day ; when you fling it over your shoulders and the whole thing flaps in your face like an avalanche, smothering up all your frantic indignation and endeavours. Then the beasts you ride, finding, as they are sure to do, that they have you at a disadvantage, are sure to be as inconvenient as possible. We came to the conclusion that the *capa*, which is not a bad thing for slow travelling on horseback in rain, is eminently unadapted for wind.

The aspect of the country on the other side of the mountain-range we had passed was more barren and desolate, even, than the country surrounding Madrid. However, it was not so flat. It looked like a volcanic formation of eruptive hills with loosish sandy slopes, on which vegetation found scanty footing and seemed liable to slip away.

We could not see Segovia, as we had hoped. Descending to *Fonda San Rafael*, we supped on a rabbit, and walked out to see the sun set. We came to where a flock of goats were being milked near a farm-house by the banks of the stream. The manners of the goats towards one another are curious. They seem to take a pleasure in a sort of sham fight, as

Segovia

regular in its tactics as a hick-hack, smick-smack cutlass-encounter between two desperate smugglers at Astleys. The combatants push with their heads down, leaning against each other's horns; shortly they rear high up, and coming down mutually tap their fore-feet sharply together. Some of them would do this eight or nine times running. We got a bowl of goat's milk to drink. It is not quite so good as cow's milk, but there is no great difference.

Here, next morning, we turned off the Salamanca road towards Segovia. About half-way stands on a barish hill the *Real Sitio* of Rio Frio. This is a hunting-box of the kings of Spain; but being a vast oblong building, it was objected that it was too big for a box, and might be more properly called a hunting imperial, or at least a chase-seat. Soon after, the spires and towers of Segovia overtopped an intervening hill.

The entrance of the city by this way passes through a long, straggling, dilapidated suburb on a low ridge. Projecting beam-crossed gables, propped on posts of wood and granite, or here and there a few Moorish columns, frown above deep-arched portals. Between this suburb and the main body of the city is a valley spanned by the celebrated Roman aqueduct, the honour of whose construction is however disputed by Hercules, the Moors, and the Devil. It is built arch over arch, growing lighter towards the top, and is a very graceful piece of masonry.

At length we reached the irregular-shaped, unevenly-built *plaza*. The shabbiest, wretched old tumble-down house-front in the whole place was that of the principal Segovian *posada*. We were assured, however, by the *mozo de la cuadra*, whom we met under the rickety gateway, that there were splendid new apartments at our disposition; and effectually the inside turned out both much better and more ample than the

The Alcazar

dismal narrow front led us to anticipate. Our window commanded a good view of the *plaza*, at the opposite side of which is the rounded chancel-end of the cathedral, rich with flying buttresses. The inside is fine; the stone roof struck us as rather heavy; there are beautiful windows of stained glass.

Next to the *alcazar*—a noble top-heavyish Gothic tower surrounded by a mass of peak-roofed French-château-like buildings. Before the courtyard was an iron railing. As we walked in, the porter at the gate, judging by our get-up that we were a couple of inquisitive Andalusian *arrieros*, stopped us.

“Nobody can enter; it is the hour of the *siesta*, and all the garrison are asleep.”

“*Caramba!* we cannot help that. *Nosotros somos caballeros Ingleses que tenemos bula special para ver a todo.* (We are English gentlemen who have special license to see everything); get you speedily to the snoring captain of the garrison, and tell him that, with permission, we desire to inspect the premises.”

The guardian of the gate, on hearing this, bowed very low, and entering the fortress, shortly emerged with an artillery captain, whom we begged to excuse (*disimular*) our disturbing him, as we had only a short time in Segovia, and should not like to leave it without inspecting this precious stone in the battled tiara of Castille. He received us with great courtesy, and showed us over the whole place. We fraternised the more from finding we had many common friends among the artillery officers at Seville. This *alcazar* is now converted into a great (I believe *the* great) college of artillery. It contains many magnificent rooms with richly-carved, emblazoned, and gilded ceilings.

We saw the schools of design and of models, the

Segovia by Sunset

gymnasium, and the miniature cannons and mortars which the boys are taught to manœuvre with little ponies. Taking leave of the captain, we now descended to the banks of the Eresma, whence the view of the *alcazar* which crowns the abutting end of a rocky promontory, whose base is washed by a turn of the stream, tempted Harry to sketch it in his pocket-book.

While he was at work, and I sat by eating oranges under a shady tree, two men drew near from behind. We were rather afraid they would take us up before the authorities for sketching the fortress; but they only begged us to *disimulate* their curiosity in wishing to see the sketch, and entered into conversation. Among other things they asked if we were not Italians, as they judged us to be from our manner of speaking the Castilian.

Afterwards we endeavoured in vain to get into the Templars' church, and the Parral convent. Ascending the wooded and grassy glade, along which the river runs beneath the long rocky ridge, the city above, lit by sunset, flickered in the watery mirror like palaces of fire. The aspect of Segovia from this valley is very striking and beautiful. The brow of the rock is fringed with dilapidated battlements, beyond which slope irregular terraces of quaint old-fashioned houses, and the sky-line is broken by many lofty towers and spires besides those of the *alcazar* and cathedral. Far away beyond the gorge, snowy peaks deeply tinged with purple carmine "stood up and took the evening."

We agreed that Segovia and Cuenca were commendable *termini* for a romantic honeymoon tour, supposing the parties to be of suitable disposition; that is to say, that the lovely bride should have a taste for water-colours, and the noble and stalwart bridegroom should be willing to carry

Mellilunacy

the paint-box and camp-stool, and make himself generally useful as a moveable figure of the foreground. I wonder if I shall ever revisit these places in my mellilunacy. We shall start for Valladolid to-morrow.

I have been loading my revolver, which I had discharged as we rode into Segovia. I blew, as my custom is, down the barrels, to see if they were clear, and finding one stopped up, I fired a cap to free the stoppage. To my surprise, instead of a slight snap and flash, there was a tremendous report, and a great piece of plaster fell out of a hole in the wall. One of the barrels had missed fire, it appeared, and the charge remained. Harry, who had been in bed an hour, woke up and asked if I had killed anybody ; and when I told him it was an accident, he begged me not to do it again, and went to sleep.

CHAPTER XXX

VALLADOLID, *May 12.*

ON Monday, May 10th, early in the morning, we set off for Valladolid. By some little misapprehension of the points of the compass, we took the direct north road, instead of the north-west. When we had got to the top of the hill to the north of Segovia, and seen a view of the city by sunrise,—if possible more lovely than yester-evening's sunset,—we discovered, by inquiry, that we were in the way to Escarabajos instead of Coca. So we went down into the valley again, and followed the course of the Eresma.

The country soon became dreary and sterile. The soil is a sharp white sand, less adapted for vegetation than for the sprinkling of kitchen-flags. After crossing the Eresma again a league or so on this side of Santa Maria de la Nieva, we came upon a forest of huge pines. This sort of pine I had never seen before. It is in character more like Scotch fir than any I know ; but its shape is more cabbage-headed, and the colour a most brilliant emerald-green. The feathery hair (for I don't think a pine can properly be said to possess foliage) was about five inches long, the cones as big as a smallish cocoa-nut.

As there were a good many lying about which seemed fresh fallen, Harry, whose brother is rather a pine-fancier, made an onslaught upon one to get some seeds to carry home ; and when I saw they were as big as an almond, I

Pinocchi and Pignuoli

began to chop away with my dagger on my own account. These little pine-nuts, which have a hardish thin shell, are very good to eat, and taste like the grains of soft, scarcely-ripened wheat, only richer,—perhaps more like a butter-nut than anything else ; they are not easy to get at, for the cones are hard to split, and exude a varnishing gum, very annoying to the fingers.

Though we did not rise much from the banks of the Eresma to Santa Maria, the country thence to Naba de la Cova has all the character of bleak, desolate table-land on a mountain-top. After Naba, however, it began to show more signs of cultivation, and the sandy excoriation of the country's face was here and there plastered with patches of grass.

At Naba, where we had stopped to inquire our way of a knot of loiterers before the *posada* door (and to light our cigars), after some little conversation an old man had asked us whether we were Spaniards or foreigners, himself inclining to believe that we were Andaluzes. Not very far out of the village a party of women and children, weeding near the edge of a barley-field, cried out to us, and begged to know when the *Funcion* at Coca was to take place.

“What *Funcion* ?” said we.

“Surely you, *caballeros*, are the *oficiales toreros* (bull-fighting officials) who are coming from Segovia to have a *fiesta de toros* on the day of San Fulano.”

“Your pardon, fair ladies, we are no bull-fighters, but English gentlemen, on their travels, at your service.” On this they laughed, and exclaimed,

“*Mentiras!* (fibs) *carai que embusteros son los Andaluzes!*” (good lack, what story-tellers are the Andalusians !) So we left them under their delusion.

Coca

The castle of Coca soon appeared in the distance. It did not seem anything very remarkable, though we had read in the guide-book that it was a splendid specimen of a Castilian fortress. We inquired of an old man, who was driving a herd of horses into the town, what sort of an edifice it was? He replied, "Poco" (a mere nothing), and shook his head contemptuously over the insignificance of the ruin.

However, as we had arrived early, and had dined before sunset, we repaired to the castle, and found it indeed a very striking ruin. It rises from the bottom of a great hole about forty feet deep, excavated near the brow of a hill. This deep cavity is walled round like a well. From its edge, of course, when you see all the bottom of the castle, otherwise concealed in the pit, the grandeur of the building is much increased.

It is a regular old-fashioned, heraldic-looking castle, with pepper-box turrets at the top corners. It is entered by a bridge on the north side. The interior is of a somewhat modern Arabesque. The old *posadero* of La Cruz, to whom we were recommended for information, knew nothing about it, but thought the Duques de Alva had been its *alcaldes* in the old time.

There is a tall watch-tower standing on higher ground than the castle, 400 or 500 yards distant.

At sunset, on my way back to the *posada*, passing through the straggling outskirts of the town, I stopped before the gate of an untidy little garden. Here an aged priest in a very seedy, old, ragged *sotana*, with a greasy black skullcap on the top of his head, was stooping down, and sticking little lath crosses in the ground.

He had a little boy helping him, who carried an armful of these crosses, which he took one by one, held it up before

Monomaniac Cura

him, mumbled something that seemed like a prayer in Latin, stooped down and made a hole with the end of it, into which he dropped a pinch of some powder out of a paper parcel, planted the cross in the hole, and then holding his hand over it, seemed to be giving it his blessing.

All this was done quickly, but with much seriousness and solemnity on the part of the priest, and seemed to be an affair of daily business, for the whole of one end of his garden was planted as close as could be with these little crosses (interspersed with onions), and indeed must have contained some thousands. But there was something comic in the appearance of the old figure, who had a very long, crooked, hooked nose, and a back bent double. He was, moreover, blind of an eye, and the other had a sort of oblique tendency to peep round the corner of his nose, which prevented one from doubting that he would have squinted if he had possessed two.

As he rose from planting a cross, and was taking another from the boy, he caught sight of me looking over his gate.

“Adios, Señor Andaluz,” said he, beckoning me with the cross in his hand,—“Welcome to the garden of the souls!” (En hora buena sea entrado Vmd. en el jardin de las almas!) “Shall I plant a cross for the benefit of your soul, *amigo*? *Vamos*—this very one shall be for you.”

“Muchisimo le agradezco a su reverencia, Señor Cura” (I am extremely obliged to your reverence, Sir Priest), said I, taking off my *sombrero*, and entering the garden. As I approached, he was stooping down over the cross; and the boy, to whom his back was turned, made a sign (putting his finger to his temple, and turning it backwards and forwards as one bores a hole with a pricker), to signify to me that there was a screw loose in his master’s understanding.

The Garden of Souls

When my cross had been duly consecrated, I ventured to inquire in what manner its establishment would benefit my soul ?

“Perhaps you may not be aware,” he replied, “that every cross which is set up here on earth deprives the devil of a soul ; for the number of souls received into heaven will be exactly measured by the number of crosses set up on earth. As I have nothing particular to do, I make fifty of these holy symbols of our faith every morning, and set them up here in my garden every evening before sunset. You see I drop in a few onion-seeds beneath each. When the onion comes to be of a good size, I pull it up and the cross with it. The onion goes into the *olla*, and the cross (which is by that time nearly rotten) into the fire. But at the moment when I pull up the onion and the cross, a man dies, and a soul is saved.”

“But when you pull up my cross and onion, shall I die too ?”

“*Es regular que si* (probably) ; but what signifies that ? You will be saved as sure as my onion is cooked.”

“But if the devil is continually losing souls in this wholesale manner, I wonder he does not come by in the night and pull up your crosses.”

“I should like to see him try, or any of his demons. They dare not, my son,—they dare not touch my crosses with their own impious hands ; but they do what they can to instigate wicked little boys to come by when I am out of the way, and pull up my crosses in great numbers. And sometimes the demons will undo the sneck of the gate, and drive in a score or so of *malditos puercos* (cursed pigs), who make great havoc both with my crosses and my onions ; and I have to plant them again as it pleases Providence, it being impossible for me to tell, unless I were a prophet,

Cross Purposes with Satan

which cross belongs to which onion ; and this no doubt makes considerable confusion in the dates of salvation in particular souls ; and probably some unlucky ones who happen to die while the pigs are in the garden are cast away altogether."

"But why is the devil obliged to overturn crosses by deputy ?"

"You see, my son, if the devil were to touch one of these sacred emblems, it would cleave to him for ever. If the cross were so large and heavy that he could not carry it away with him, he would be held there in shame and torture to the end of time. That is the reason why it is so much the custom to have huge stone crosses in the centre of market-places ; for where men are selling and buying, and gossiping and lying, there the devil always would like to be in the midst of them. But in the case of the smaller crosses, of this size for instance, if he touched it, it would stick to him, and brand him for ever among his execrable brethren with a mark of the most indelible shame ; and moreover, its holy influence would neutralise a great part of his malign efficacy in doing mischief."

"It seems a pity that some saint did not, in times past, find an opportunity of clapping a cross on the devil's back unawares."

"It has often and often been tried, but Saint Iago himself is not man enough to take Satan at a disadvantage. This desirable climax is reserved for the triumph of the last day. Then the angels Michael and Gabriel will pin him between the crosses of the good and bad thief. These will stick to him like pitch. They will cast him down headlong into the darkest bottom of hell, where he will lie between these crosses, gnashing his teeth in great anguish, for all the rest of eternity."

A Difficult Subtlety

“But will these holy engines, remaining in contact with him for so long a time, effect no salutary influence on his destiny?”

“Doubtless they would, if the cross of the good thief were to happen to come uppermost; but it is to be presumed that Michael, who owes him an old grudge, will send down some trustworthy angel along with Satan in his fall, to turn him in case of accidents, and leave him with the bad cross uppermost. But the devil, who never neglects a chance, and is desperately persevering, will spend all his time in attempting to wriggle himself round; and who knows what time may bring to pass?”

“I thank your reverence much for this most valuable disquisition, which I shall take care to make known to the world at large. I kiss your hand, *Señor cura*.”

“I kiss yours,” said he. “Adieu.”

Next day we set off early for Valladolid, not by Olmedo as we had intended, but by Mojados, a road which does not appear on the map, and does not appear very clearly on the face of the country, being often lost in the sand; however, they told us that it was a shorter way.

We rode the greater part of the day through vast and sombre pine-forests. The conversation, partly *apropos* of the crazy old *curé*'s theories, and partly, perhaps, influenced by the gloomy scenery of the forest, turned on the future punishment of sin. Harry advocated rather universalist doctrines: but I said I could not conceive that sin should not leave some indelible mark; seared and furrowed traces of the soul's disease, which even eternity could never wear away.

“Here, where we can exist only in the shifting, momentary Present, life's distractions cloud over the memory alike of good and evil. If it were not for oblivion, experience

A Vision of Judgment

would be too heavy a burden for man to bear upon his shoulders—he would sink in the mire, broken down before his time, and life would become at once a state of torment instead of trial.

“But when the trial is ended, there is no reason why reward or punishment should not be complete. For this end, memory of all the predominant good or evil of our past lives will be sufficient: and supposing the evil prevails, imagine what a revelation that would be. Stripped of the semi-transparent bandage in which she went half-blindfold upon earth, the soul will be laid bare, to be haunted without respite by all those hideous nightmares of sin, and shame, and horror, which now and then, one at a time, peep, dimly seen, beneath the corner of the curtain.

“We shall awake, amid a confused huddle of ghosts—a cloud is still before our eyes. A trumpet sounds behind the veil! It opens, and rolling away on either side, reveals a blinding blaze of glory—to these how beautiful—to those how dreadful! An influence like a mighty rushing wind divides the multitude. On one hand kneel myriads of bright and blessed spirits, bowed in adoration; on the other, shivering, stand a crowd of dismal demons, self-convinced of their just condemnation!

“To the one a smiling heaven of sunshine opens, with a voice of heavenly music, crying, ‘Come, ye faithful!’—to the other, through falling darkness, a thunder-tone of wrath muttering, ‘Depart, ye wicked!’”

We emerged from the forest at a small village called Cazarén. Here, in the middle of the market-place, were a party of men and women, with a great heap of the cones of the pine and a fire. They singe them in the flames to get rid of the stickiness, and then open them on a block with a small one-handed adze. We bought a *cuartillo* (about a

A Dead Flat

quart) of them for about three half-pence, and kept cracking and eating them all the way to Mojados.

The country round about all seems a sunken plain, whose flat-topped hills, with crumbling sandy sides, look as if by some accident they had remained of the original level.

We crossed one of these flat tops to get to Mojados, and thence overlooking the broad arid valley, fancied we saw Valladolid about twelve miles off, but could not be certain. At Mojados we dined in the Parador of the diligence, for we had now struck upon a *camino real*. After dinner there was a guitar *funcion*, in which a professional gentleman, the *mozo de la cuadra*, and Harry, were all strumming more or less together.

Valladolid lies on a dead flat, and is an ugly city, in a frightful country, by no means worth riding through or riding to. Even the sunset-lights, by which we saw it first, failed to gild it with any colour of enthusiasm.

Observing a grassy lane that diverged from the road within a mile or so of the city, and as we were in no hurry to enter Valladolid, we turned into it, and lying down on a flowery bank, lit our cigars, and prepared to enjoy the sunset.

We had lightened the ponies of their *alforjas*, and freed them of their bridles, so that they could pick the fresh grass at ease. They seemed to like it so much that we began to pity their case for having been kept so long on dry barley. They had not had any green meat all the way from Granada, and all the time they stood in Madrid.

Two men with great green bundles of lucerne on their heads came by in the most apposite manner. They at once offered to sell, and we bought the largest of their bundles, thinking what a treat this lush herbage would be to the dry vitals of our beasts. We strewed it on the ground, and

Latet Anguis in Herba

they fell upon it voraciously enough at first ; but soon the ingenious obstinacy of the animals discovered that we took a pleasure in seeing them eat the lucerne, and they began to draw off the green heap, which they could devour by great mouthfuls, to nibble at foolish little points of grass-blades, which they pretended to consider sweeter.

We attempted for some little time to disabuse them of their error, jerking their stupid heads back over the heap again, and only allowing them to eat in peace when they ate our lucerne. This course, however, was found equally to disturb the tranquillity of our smoke and their meal ; so we let the ungrateful fools feed where they liked ; and when the sun was down rode into Valladolid.

Like our ponies, however, possessing in some degree the quality of firmness, we were resolved not to relinquish the valuable vegetation for which we had paid a considerable sum, not exceeding threepence. It was agreed, that if Harry (who is handy with cords and lashings) would make it up in a neat roll, and cord it with one of our halters, I would carry it in, and we would leave it in their mangers all night, and see if they did not repent before morning.

As we entered the gate of the city (it being now dark), this great bundle of green stuff greatly excited the suspicion of the *dogana*.

“Qu'es esto,—what's this? (holding the lamp to it), Vamos a ver que tal es la sierpe que debajo desta yerba s'esconde,—Let us see what sort of serpent lurks beneath the grass (ferreting for bottles as he spoke). It is probable that in such a meadow we shall meet some dew.”

“Nada hay señor Doganero sino unas mielgas—nada mas (it is nothing but lucerne).”

“What the deuce do your worships bring lucerne into Valladolid for, *carajo?*”

Valladolid

“A slight salad for our beasts, *con licencia*. They have had a long journey, and eaten nothing but barley since they left Granada, *de modo que bastante secas tienen las tripas* (so that their tripes are sufficiently dried up).”

Finding that there was no hay to be made of our grass, one of them seized my dagger, and examining it unsheathed, very much as if he wished to become its owner, said—

“What business have you to carry forbidden arms?”

I now began to swagger in earnest. “We are very principal English cavaliers, and have a written license in our passport to carry what arms we like. We are not accustomed to be kept from our suppers in the gates of insignificant cities, but rather to ride in with an escort, and sup with ambassadors; and if we are now travelling *incognito* by way of amusement, it is no reason why we should be treated in a manner unbecoming our rank and importance.”

This speech, which I delivered in a serious tone of offended dignity over my beggarly bundle of herbs, had more effect than I had anticipated, for the man at once gave up the dagger, and begged pardon for having treated so distinguished foreigners in a manner for which, we must allow, that the darkness and our disguise had given some excuse.

We now entered the city by the Puerta del Campo, a wide and rather handsome street, up and down which we wandered some time without being able to find a *posada*. At last we found one, and went through into the stable, where I cast the green stuff into the manger, and began to unsaddle. We had been followed into the stable by the old *huesped* of the inn, who was unfortunately both imbecile and drunk; we told him to take away some donkeys who were running loose in the stable, and who showed an immediate and obstinate proclivity to the vegetation our ponies

A Landlord in Liquor

had despised, and thrust their outstretched noses into it again while I was busy unsaddling, regardless of the intercalary kicks and cuffs I could give them meanwhile. But he only stood hiccuping irrelevant matters, till, on being spoken sharply to, he began to revile us.

“Who the devil are you, cursed Biscayan muleteers, that come and order me about in my own stable, *carajo*? Turn out the *burricos*, quotha—turn them out yourselves, and turn yourselves out with them, Biscayan *burros* as you are, *carajo!*”

“Be silent, you old numskull. Have you lived long enough to lose nine-tenths of the little wits you ever had, and to put nine of your ten toes on the threshold of Death, without learning how to receive guests of distinction, when by any remote chance they casually honour your dilapidated kennel of a *Posadilla*? ”

But he was too far gone in drink and dotage to be able at all to perceive the distinction of those guests who at present honoured him, or, indeed, to do anything but totter and stagger about, holding a very unsteady *candil*. So we adopted his suggestion, and turned out the donkeys into a small courtyard ourselves, he cursing us all the time for insolent, beggarly Biscayan varlets.

As we carried our *alforjas*, and saddles and bridles upstairs, we were met and civilly received by the *posadera*, his young and melancholy-looking wife, who made signs to us that he was not all right in his wits, and tried to calm his indignation. She showed us up to a rather desolate bedroom, but could not prevent him following and making an exceedingly inconvenient tumult over our baggage. We thought of going to another place; but remembering the difficulty of finding a *posada* at all, and the trouble of saddling again, and, to crown all, the lucerne now lying

The Museum

loose in the manger, we concluded it was best to lock up our room and leave our things, and go out to sup anywhere we could find in the *cafés* of the city.

Taking a look in at the stable, we found one of our persevering donkeys had got in again by some means, and was eating voraciously out of the Moor's manger. We kicked him out ignominiously with the vehement foot of impatience, fastened the door of the courtyard, and left the Moor and Cid munching languidly alone.

We wandered among gay crowds of people taking the *fresco* under the colonnades of Valladolid's Quadrant, found the Café de Cervantes, supped, and went home to bed.

Next morning our host was sober and civil, and it seemed that, when out of his cups, the young wife could manage him like a child. We breakfasted at the *café*, saw the museum, where there are very few good pictures, and a great many bad and clumsy and vulgar statues by Hernandez, a celebrated sculptor, in painted wood. There was a striking little statue of a tall meagre St. Francis, which did not look as if it had been cut by the same chisel, though the showman said it was. It looked more like the handiwork of Cano. There was some very fine oak carving by Berruguete.

We took a Gothic and Vandalic glance at the university and library, and went to the other side of the city to look at the silversmiths' shops, which are said to have a style peculiar to Valladolid. The Puerta de la Plateria had been pulled down, but the Calle de la Plateria has a good many silversmiths' shops. I saw nothing that attracted the eye of cupidity, except a little hook-and-eye of silver filigree, which I bought, though I am very poor. On the most moderate calculation, we shall be ten days getting to Irun, and I have only nine five-franc pieces. Harry has twelve.

A Financial Tightness

We shall have no means of drawing money at Irun, therefore, in order to get across the frontier, we depend on the sale of our ponies.

We are to set off at four this afternoon to make an easy stage of three leagues to the *Venta de Tijero* in the cool of the evening.

CHAPTER XXXI

BURGOS, May 16.

LEAVING Valladolid by the gate of Burgos, we crossed the river Pisuerga by a long and handsome old bridge at Cabezon, and arrived at the *Venta de Tijero* about an hour after dark. It was a large, square, new, clean-looking place, very different from the rambling, dirty old *ventas* of Andalucia.

Having disposed of our ponies, and told the *mozo* to carry the *alforjas* up into our room, we entered the kitchen under the gateway, and began to forage for our supper. There were some fishes like dace lying about, and we inquired what they were a dozen.

"Your worships are not about to eat them raw?" said the fat old host, who seemed to be somewhat of a character.

"Not so, *señor huesped*, but fried in oil, which also we shall be happy to purchase of you."

"*Caramba*, that is not our way of doing business in the north. The *venteros* here are not impostors and robbers, as they are in your Andalucia. My wife shall cook you as many as you can eat, and I shall charge you to-morrow morning according as it pleases Providence to bless your worships with an appetite."

There was a good deal of company in the kitchen, and one of them, a tall, lean old man, of a sombre cast of countenance, took up his parable and said, "These gentlemen, it

Railway Engineers

seems to me, are not Andaluzes, but English ; and it is *regular* (probable) that they are engineers of the railway which is to be constructed from Madrid to Paris.”

We confessed we were Englishmen, and the company took the rest of his proposition as a self-evident corollary ; for they began inquiring eagerly whether the country was practicable, and how long it would be before the railway was constructed. We, who had never heard that such a thing was contemplated, nevertheless thought it a pity to disappoint them of the official information they anticipated ; so we assured them that the country from Madrid, as far as we had gone, was eminently suited to the construction of a line ; that the main difficulty we foresaw was in crossing the Pyrenees ; but that to English engineers everything was possible ; for, if they could find no valley to go through, they thought nothing of cutting a hole through several leagues of the heart of a mountain : nathless the *ventero* need not make himself uneasy about the loss of his traffic on the road as yet, for there was no probability that the railway would be in working order before at least seven or eight years. This announcement seemed satisfactory to all parties. The conversation changed ; and *apropos* of something which I forget, the lean old man asserted very solemnly that no animal would eat Christian flesh ; and that this was an eminent proof of the supremacy of man over the rest of creation.

“But, my dear sir, don’t you remember the case of ‘that prophet’ whom the lion ate, and the donkey stood in the way ? It is written in the Old Testament, so there can be no doubt of it.”

“If it be written in the Old Testament, it becomes evident that that prophet was no Christian, but a Jew.”

“But, if lions eat Hebrews, how much more will they eat

Christian Flesh

Christians; since it is a notable fact that Christians are by far the tenderest diet? Besides which, sharks (*lobos marinos*) have eaten many Christians in the West Indies."

"With respect to marine animals I do not speak; but no animal of the earth eats Christian flesh, and this is a Catholic truth."

"Is not the worm an animal of the earth, and does it not eat the most pious Christians? In the church of the Caridad, in Seville, there is a picture of an archbishop in an open coffin. All over his body great maggots are creeping in every direction, and, indeed, seem to have eaten the greater part of him, for in many parts the bones are bare. Now, as this picture is exposed in so sacred a place, it must be presumed, on the authority of the Catholic Church, that archbishops (whose flesh is rather more Christian than ordinary) are actually eaten by worms. The picture is called the 'Triumph of Death' (*El triunfo de la Muerte*), and was painted by Valdes de Leal."

"This 'Triumph of Death,' and the case of being eaten by worms, which is indeed ignominious, has been doubtless ordained for the humiliation of fleshly pride. Death is no respecter of persons. He brings down both young and old. The *Señora huespeda* here, for example, has had ten children ('Eleven,' cried the landlady, from above the hissing frying-pan)—eleven children, I say, and death has removed them all except one."

"*Yo soy él,*" (I am he) cried a piping little voice in the back-ground; and we saw a poor little sickly boy, who did not look otherwise than rather likely food for the worms himself.

As a plateful of fish was now ready, we retired to the *comedor* (eating-place), and enjoined the bereaved mother to make haste with another relay.

Mahomet and the Fountain

After supper, going out to feed the ponies, the Moor was not hungry. I thought he might be thirsty, and led him along the stable towards the well-trough ; but when he got opposite the heels of an *entero*, he became so violent that I could not get him further, and was glad to get him back safe to his manger, after a severe fencing-match, in which both sides snorted and screamed and lunged backwards, and flourished their heels very truculently.

As Mahomet could not be persuaded to go to the fountain, I had to untie the bucket-rope and bring him his drink, after which he ate his supper peaceably, whilst I lay among the straw smoking and listening to his munchings and champings. This sound is musical to the ear of a traveller homeward bound, whose horse's legs depend upon his teeth.

We were off about seven next morning, and stopped to breakfast at Dueñas. About twelve o'clock, as we were riding along by the side of the road, a *caminero* (road-mender and guard) called out to us :—

“Hallo, you there, are you *contrabandistas*?—stop!” We stopped a moment, and said :

“Is that the way you address gentlemen, and begin by throwing imputations upon their character? You deserve no answer—adieu ;” and we rode on. He seized his musket, and crying “Stop thieves!” gave chase, now and then presenting his musket as if he meant to shoot. We took no notice of this, and cantered gently on, a little quicker than he could run, for about a mile.

As our ponies were not very fresh, and mine rather lame, we thought it would take too much out of them to distance him altogether ; so we pulled up and waited for him. He arrived panting and puffing, in great perspiration and choler.

“Now, sir,” said I, before he had breath enough to speak, “we have given you a slight lesson of civility, which it is

An Uncivil Spaniard

not generally requisite to teach Spaniards, whom we have found a courteous people. You appear to be an unfortunate exception ; and, feeling that your education had been neglected, we thought a little practical instruction would do you good. If you had spoken civilly to us at first, we should have been happy to show you our papers, and convince you of our respectability on the spot ; but, as it is, we have given you a slight run in the sunshine, to sweat the surplus acerbity out of your manners."

" *Carajo!* Spaniards are not accustomed to be made a jest of. I shall arrest you—you shall be fined and imprisoned, *carajo!*" cried he, panting and puffing, and wiping his face with his sleeve.

" You seem a gentleman of great importance and authority ! perhaps you are an *alcalde!* "

" Yes, *alcalde* I am ; and I will *alcadeise* you when we come to the next village.

" What is it called ? "

" Magas ; and its prison is much at your service."

" Ah ! *señor alcalde* of Magas, your principality seems to contain but a few shabbyish cottages ; and indeed it must be a poor place which sends its *alcalde* to work on the road. Still it is something to reign at all. How does *su señora*, the *alcaldesa*, and all the little *alcaldesitos* of Magas ? "

" Be silent, insolent man. I said I was an *alcalde* on the road, and there I will make my authority respected."

" Oh ! then you are only governor of pickaxes and hammers, with a stone-heap for your throne. But come along, we like your company, and indeed it seems you prefer wearing the road to mending it. We shall feel it our duty, as you have treated us uncivilly, to take you before the *alcalde* of the next place ; for, though the little eccentricities of your manner (he had cursed us by all the most indecent oaths he

Chaff Against the Grain

could think of) only divert *us*, they might annoy other travellers. Therefore we shall, in a friendly manner, represent to the *alcalde* that, from the peculiar turn of your mind, you are not so much adapted for this as you might be in some other equally honourable employment. In the meantime pray don't distress yourself by disturbing the serenity of your temper (he was almost black in the face with rage). Would your worship smoke? (offering a paper of *cigarillos*). No? (lighting one myself). *No haga Vmd. desaires*, pray don't stand on ceremony." He said "No, thank you," very sulkily; but, about this stage of the discourse, he appeared to begin to surmise that he had, metaphorically speaking, put his foot in it. He was a great hulking fellow, more than six feet high, with a stupid, fierce countenance, and a squint. The expression of his face reminded us of a baited bull.

However, now we had begun it, we thought it a pity not to see our *funcion* to an end: so for the next mile, till we reached Magas, I kept sticking *bandarillas* of chaff into the tough hide of his bovine intellect. Harry suggested that we might lose a good deal of time, and had perhaps better buy him off; but I was decidedly for going before the authorities, "for," said I, "there will ten to one be something to make a story of, and we have had lamentably few adventures lately. It would even be worth while almost to pass a night in prison."

Reaching the village, we inquired for the house of the *alcalde*. He was not at home, but his wife and daughter appeared at the door. In the meantime, what with the sultry weather, and much conversation with the *caminero*, I was very thirsty, and persuaded the *alcalde's* pretty daughter to bring me a glass of water. A crowd of forty or fifty, chiefly women and children, had gathered by the time the *alcalde* arrived; and I made the best of my time, to have

The Alcalde

public opinion on our side, by making civil speeches to the bystanders—giving a *cigarillo* or two to the men—admiring a baby or two in the arms of influential matrons, and insinuating a compliment or two on their own charms to the younger ladies.

The *jefe politico* (political chief) of the place was a quiet, respectable-looking man, dressed in *paño pardo* (brown cloth). I saluted him with respectful ceremony, handed him our papers, and from the saddle delivered a dignified and moderate statement of our case, while he stood in judgment beneath the porch of his house. When I had done, the *camintero* demanded a private audience, and they entered the house together. When they came out again, the *alcalde* looked rather perplexed and irresolute. Of course he could not understand a word of our passports, which were in English and French. He said copies must be taken of them, and sent to Madrid; that he could not see we had been to blame; but as we had brought the man off his work, we had better give him a gratuity of a *peseta*.

“Our papers are in order, as you must clearly see, Señor Alcalde. They are already registered in the archives of all the ambassadors in Madrid. Therefore our names will be sufficient, and these we are prepared to give you. As to giving a gratuity to this man, the trouble he has had is only the result of his little judgment and want of discrimination, in mistaking so principal cavaliers for suspicious persons. He has been insolent, also, to the full extent of his conversational powers. If we encourage this ill-behaviour by rewards, we make other travellers on the road all the more liable to be annoyed and impeded by any *camintero*, *mas tonto que regular* (more foolish than usual), who may take it into his head to stop them. Therefore, with all respect

I am in Possession of the Street

for you, we shall not act on your suggestion, and have the honour of wishing you a good day."

Hereupon, I put spurs to the Moor, waved my *sombrero* to the company, and we rode along. But our friend the *caminero* did not at all approve of this arrangement. He ran after us, crying, "Stop thief!" Harry stopped, and I was slowly moving on, when the man got before me, presented his musket, and shouted, "Will you stop, *carajo!* or shall I fire?"

"Fire, you old ass!" said I; "you know as well as I do, that there is no more charge in your musket than there are brains in your head; and if it would go off, you can no more shoot straight than you can look straight with your squint-eyes. Will you rob me in the street, *ladron*, after the *alcalde* has said you had no cause to molest us?"

In the midst of this, the *alcalde* came running up in a great pucker, and said:

"Put down your gun, man! This is out of all course of law; we must refer the matter to the *maestro*."

Harry now departed with the *alcalde* and the passports, and I remained entertaining the crowd with an improved *réchauffé* of the gravelling things I had said to my enemy before. He, thinking me the more dangerous man of the two, had remained to keep an eye upon me, which I was glad of, because I knew his absence would enable Harry to get his statement made in peace and quiet, without interruption. Besides which, the audience was by this time unanimously on my side, and laughed so much at the playful little sarcasms with which I kept him in torture, that he found it at last intolerably unpleasant, and, shouldering his musket, departed, amid the jeers of the company.

When he was gone, they told me he was not of this but the next village, and they had always heard he was a very

“ My Oracular Tongue ”

honourable man, but it appeared his conduct in this instance had been inexcusable. One of the women asked me if we were not Portuguese, and seemed to be all the better pleased to hear I was not. The *caminero* had confidently asserted we were Alemanes (Germans).

After about a quarter of an hour Harry returned : the *maestro* had decided in his favour, and reprimanded the *caminero*, telling him “ that to create obstructions on the highway was not a means to make foreigners of distinction travel through their country.” Who this *maestro* was it did not clearly appear. Harry said he seemed a venerable old man, to whom the *alcalde* listened with supreme deference. Perhaps he was the schoolmaster, and most learned man of the place.

I was considerably elated with my success as a mob orator, this being the most public display I ever had to make in a foreign language ; and though my opponent was certainly a very stupid and sulky fellow, still they seemed to listen impartially to all he said, and only by degrees came over to my side of the quarrel, so that I think I may consider it to a certain extent a triumph in the Spanish idiom. It cost us about an hour and a half's delay.

At Torquemada we dined, and took a *siesta*, the day being very hot. The Moor cuts and stumbles a good deal, and is getting lame. The eight or nine hundred miles we have travelled has told on his constitution. All the latter part of our journey, indeed ever since we left Granada, we have been going as far every day as our ponies could be got to go ; and though they had three weeks' rest at Madrid, as we were not there to see after them, I fear they were not fairly treated.

Towards sunset we set off for Quintana, and made the greater part of our stage by starlight. The *posada* was

Gadshill

very full, and the hostess and her daughters in a great bustle. We could only be accommodated by having beds set up in the store-room ; and while we were going to bed, they were constantly coming in, to get cakes and *bollos* out of a large chest. At last we lost our patience, and said that they had better take all they wanted once for all, for if they came again, we would not let them in. The old woman had asked us whether we were not Spaniards—somebody had suggested we were French, but she did not believe it. I asked her what she thought we were. She answered Madrilenians, and we did not contradict her. I suppose on the strength of this she settled the question among the gossips of the household ; for next morning, when a little boy helping in the stables talked about the French gentleman's hack, the *mozo de la cuadra* rebuked him, saying he ought to know better than to mistake Spaniards for Frenchmen.

We were up very early, and started half an hour before sunrise. The confusion of *arrieros* getting their mules packed in the dark court-yard, and going about with lanterns, reminded us of the Carriers' scene in the hostel of Gadshill :—

1st Carrier.—“I think this be the most rascally house for fleas in all London-road.”

2nd Carrier.—“It must be near four of the clock. Charles's wain is over the new chimney.”

3rd Carrier.—“Lend me thy lantern, friend !”

1st Carrier.—“Lend thee my lantern ? ay ! when ? Lend me thy lantern, quotha ! I know a trick worth two of that.”

We had eaten a little chocolate before starting. We baited our beasts at Villa Nueva, but did not breakfast, though I, being very hungry, had a pennyworth of *aguardi-*

The Moor at Buriel

ente, and a halfpennyworth of bread, which I discussed in haste, sitting on the corn-bin. At Celada, we breakfasted on two bad watery fishes, made still more nauseous with garlic. After breakfast, and feeding our ponies, we loosened the Moor, and he immediately lay down in our presence, with his head on the stone threshold of the stable-door. He looked so wretched and weary and lean, and so changed from the round, sleek, pincushion-plumpness in which he left Seville, that we felt sorry and conscience-stricken. I took his portrait lying at full length.

A party of Biscayans arrived in a lumbering old rattle-trap; they were troublesomely inquisitive, and, besides, gratuitously remarked that my Spanish was better than Harry's, whom they had scarcely heard open his mouth.

Here we were four leagues from Burgos, and the Moor was so lame, I determined to walk all the way to ease him. On leaving the village, I took off my Marsellés jacket and *calzones*, and walked in my *elastica* and white drawers, to be cooler. At Buriel, the Moor showed that, though worn and lean and lame, his spirit was not subdued; for, as I stopped to get a drink, he perceived another *entero* on the other side of the street, when, in spite of all I could do, he pulled violently back, and began kicking at his enemy. In this unruly proceeding he shook off the *alforjas* and upper clothing, which I laid across the saddle, into the dust. I begin to lose all hope that the Moor will ever learn to benefit by the uses of adversity. The owner of the ill-used beast, though he swore vigorously at first, when I begged his pardon was very good-natured, and helped me to pick up my scattered valuables. The woman of the house where I got a drink asked me if I was a play-actor, judging I suppose from the gay colours of my dress, which was, indeed, theatrical enough. A sky-blue knitted woollen vest opening

Our Nations and Callings

down the front, with a broad embroidered border of yellow and scarlet, clasped with the filigree *broche* I had got in Valladolid—my loins girt with a crimson *faja*, striped with white, green, and purple—my lower extremities in tight-fitting white drawers, continued below the knee by embroidered *bottines* of yellow leather. My *sombrero*, too, was very high-peaked, and adorned with two huge tufts of black silk on the rim and crown. Each particular item of attire I have had occasion to purchase, has always been selected with an *arrière pensée* to my *arriero* costume having some day to figure on the boards of the Hovingham theatre. We intend to write a Piece with Brigands in it on purpose; and between our wardrobes, I think we could turn out a gang of eight or nine very respectable ruffians in the *dégagée* demi-toilette of the robbers' cave.

We have passed as belonging to sundry nations on our way: Italians, Portuguese, French, Germans, Andalusians, Madrilenians, Biscayans; and sundry professions—pottery-men, equestrian performers, railway-engineers, pedlars, bull-fighters, miners, and play-actors.

The country, as we approached Burgos, had been improving, the hills getting rounder at the top, and the soil less sandy. From a windy height we saw the twin-spires of Burgos's beautiful cathedral.

As we were entering beneath the dark-arched gateway, the *doganero*, who was loitering some little way off outside, came running up, and calling out,—“Hallo, stop, you *Manchegos!* I must see what you have in the *alforjas!*” We stopped and told him who we were, and he let us pass without examination. We have really, on the whole, been very little troubled with custom-house regulations. But these abuses (I mean custom-houses), being the relic of barbarous times, to which they were greatly better adapted

Burgos

than the present day, are very much less felt when you travel in the old barbarous fashion on horseback, when they can feel your saddle-bags and let you go, than when you are a passenger in steamboats and railways. Then, instead of filtering through by driblets, suspicious packages come in a great volley ; and, as is the case in almost all grievances, the ceremony and delay are much more than the hardship of having your luggage searched.

I was not so much tired with my twelve miles' walk as I expected to be, and indeed am much stronger than I was. I think I may congratulate myself now fairly on having quitted the condition of an invalid : for, during the greater part of this journey, I have been ten or twelve hours a day in the saddle, and find myself no worse, but the better—only rather thinner than I was when I left Seville.

Arrived in Burgos, we had to settle whether, in the present dilapidated state of our finances, it was prudent to go to the best inn ; but being weary and hungry and dusty, the desire of comfortable washing and food and beds, overcame our economical scruples. Leading our beasts in under the lofty portal of the *Fonda de las Diligencias*, it appeared that our outward men did not carry any conviction of our respectability to the minds of the hostelry's understrappers. One of them, a handsome, stupid-looking giant about seven feet high, superciliously looking down upon us, inquired what we were come for ?

No doubt, he simply meant to inform himself what gentleman's baggage we had undertaken to transport somewhere, and he was merely treating us to the ordinary patronising airs it was his wont to use towards muleteers. But the hungry and weary British lion is not accustomed to such usage.

“Come for?” we cried in one breath, “Come for? *tontillo!* (you little simpleton !). Is it a custom to ask gentlemen,

The Cid's Portmanto

when they brighten your *posada's* portals with their presence, what they come for? Come for? Why, dinner—supper—beds—breakfast—and provender for our horses! Here, take them to the stables; and you, other one, carry these *alforjas* up to our apartment!”

We had a very decent dinner, which we did all the more justice to from having been starved since the Escorial. Our room was comfortable, and the beds not infested with vermin. Before going to bed I put wet bandages on the Moor's fetlock, which he cuts with the heel of his off shoe. I hope it may take out the inflammation. I have been keeping it wet all day.

The post-office was not open this morning when we went at first. The cathedral, with which we solaced our impatience, is a mass of the richest carving inside and out. In one of the *sacristias* they showed us a carved oak chest, which the Cid had sent for from Valencia, charged with his effects; but it had never reached its destination, and is kept here as a relic. Instead of being affected with pity of the Cid for the loss of his wardrobe, our thoughts turned to our own portmantos, now on the road from the metropolis to the frontier, *per galera*. Alas! how much more interesting to the unlearned are contemporary events than those of history.

We now returned through the sombre Gothic gateway, niched with statues of Burgalese worthies, which opens from the old town upon the bridge over the Arlanzon, and seeking the post-office once more, were this time successful.

I found in the list, No. 981, the name *Tagtag*, which, as it seemed about as near as a Spanish post-officer was likely to transcribe the word Cayley from an English superscription, I asked to see. I recognised with delight a well-known, much-loved specimen of excellent penwomanship, and broke the blossom branch of hawthorn waving over the bell of the device in wax of roseate hue.

CHAPTER XXXII

VITORIA, *May 18.*

THE Moor's fetlock was better for his two days' rest and wet bandaging. Before starting, I made a sort of boot, or rather gaiter, for him, by folding a silk handkerchief square-wise into a broad belt, which, wrapping it round the joint, I lashed on with tape; so that now, though he often clashes his clumsy fore-legs together, he cannot cut his wound open again.

Our conversation, as we rode out of Burgos, treated of literary thefts; and how, after thinking some modern author a clever fellow for a long while on the strength of some excellent thing or two, perhaps the only bits of him which stick in your memory, you find the very same excellent things in some dark corner of Montaigne, or Rabelais, or Quevedo.

I take it, the law of literary honesty is something of this sort. What is simply true and useful and solid information, you acquire indifferently from the observation of yourself and others. For what you borrow of this kind no acknowledgment is necessary: it would be troublesome to the reader, and almost impossible to the writer, to chronicle the particular digging where he got each particular lump of Sacramental mud, which scattered grains of wisdom made it worth while to throw into his basket.

But who that wanders with his mule and pickaxe and

Plagiarism

cradle along the banks of Time's golden river, shall not remember the aspect and the name of that spot where he found some massive nugget of wit or truth, such as nature can only afford to sprinkle here and there?

Wherever we pick up, in the dusty treasuries and armories of old, a lump of golden truth condensed in an apophthegm, or a rusty old arrow-head of ancient wit, we have no business to mint the one, or set the other in our bow, without letting the world know from whose crucible and quiver they came.

I fear too many of our modern authors, "whose wit is not so perfect as their memory,"—this sarcasm Edmund Burke let fly at first, but Sheridan picked it up and sharpened the point, and ground the twin barbs into a more elaborately balanced epigram,—too many of our modern authors live by putting a new polish upon old plate, and new shafting and feathering old arrow-heads.

Wordsworth was not ashamed to steal from so well-known an author as Pascal. Do you remember where he says—

"And the most difficult of tasks to keep
Heights which the soul is competent to gain"?

Pascal writes, if I remember right—

"Ces grands efforts de l'esprit où l'âme touche quelquefois, sont choses où elle ne se tient pas : elle y saute seulement pour retomber aussitôt." But let us hope that it was a coincidence.

Sterne, I fear, is guilty of stealing his "Flattering Beggar," without acknowledgment, from Quevedo. And he has not even the poor excuse of poverty to cover his dishonesty with rags. I have always thought Sterne the most European of our English wits; and perhaps the reason is

Characters of Moor and Cid

that he purloined largely from all the best authors of the Continent. His "Koran" is full of the best wit and wisdom in small pieces that I remember.

Shortly after this Harry fell behind rather : the paces of the ponies are not very even, the Moor walking faster : and a walk with breaks of fadge is our pace. Soon before reaching Monasterio, I heard a pattering of feet, and up came the Cid without his master, without *alforjas*, and with the cloak, only held by one tie of the tape, trailing along the ground. I was afraid some serious accident had happened. I tried to catch the Cid, who refused to be so treated, preferring to expatiate free in a barley-field. I was on the point of leaving him and returning along the road, when Harry appeared in the distance, *con las alforjas al cuello* (the saddle-bags on his shoulder), and I went to meet him. Charging both *alforjas* on the Moor, we walked back together ; and after about a quarter of an hour Harry caught the Cid, showing great patience and subtlety, which indeed were requisite ; for the Cid is a sly brute, greatly superior in intellect and experience of the world to the Moor, who, on the other hand, is of a much nobler and more courageous nature.

We now descended into Monasterio. Here there was a respectable *posada* with nobody in it except the hostess, who seemed dazed and giddy, and we thought at first she was drunk, and next that she was insane. She could not be persuaded to make any effort towards our supper ; and stood, with dreamy wandering eyes, leaning against the wall, while we vainly attempted to impress upon her the urgency of the occasion.

While this difficulty was still pending, and we were beginning to think we should have to make up the fire on the cold ashes of the kitchen-hearth, and forage in the place

Empty Praise and Solid Pudding

for something to cook, the strumming of guitars and the gingling thump of tambourines, and a sound of voices, came along the street. Soon after this musical procession had passed, the husband and two sisters of our hostess came in.

To the younger of these, who seemed a brisk little body, we addressed our petition for supper; and while she was kindling the kitchen-fire, by way of stimulus to her activity, I complimented her on her good looks.

She turned upon me rather fiercely, and said in a tragic tone, "*Yo no soy guapa*" (I am not pretty), and seemed disposed to think I was speaking ironically. And, indeed, I saw the reason why, when, by the flame springing from the kindling, it was apparent that her face was marked with a slight fret-work of small-pox, illustrating the decided advantage of chiselled features over gouged.

I saw no way out of my dilemma, but by roundly affirming, that I meant what I said, and would affirm to all *contradictentes* except herself, that she was *muy guapita*. And though she continued sulky for a while, she shortly began to relent, as her vanity persuaded her to surmise that I *might* have been in earnest. By the time supper was ready, the compliment had worked on her constitution, and she waited upon us and stopped to converse in a most affable manner.

She told us her sister had been very ill ever since her confinement three weeks ago, and was queer in her head, poor thing: but the baby was a beautiful baby. She admired our silver buttons and clasps, told us about the procession, which, in the absorption of supper, I grieve to say I did not pay sufficient attention to, and have forgotten all about.

Next morning we rode along a pretty valley to Briviesca. The stream ran northward, and the blue mountains of the

Briviesca and Pancorvo

Pyrenees looked in through the opening vista. We are delighted to be getting into a mountain district again after all those horrid plains of La Mancha and Valladolid. At Briviesca there is a good inn, and a civil landlord. He took us to see the *retablo* of Santa Clara, a beautiful oak carving thirty feet high.

I thought I should have had a chance of selling my revolver, which would have eased our financial tightness. But when I had astonished the company with two or three barrels, and the important man likely to buy had been drawn to witness the miracle, the other barrels (having been loaded long before, and the nipples being rusty) did not go off, and the purchaser did.

If we had got ten or twelve dollars for the pistol, it would have made us independent of selling our ponies at Yrun. The ponies, both of them, were off their feed at Briviesca. About two leagues further on we stopped to let them graze in a clovery ditch by the road-side. The limestone dust of the highway encourages the growth of clover. They say, if you put lime on a moor, it brings up this grass.

Reaching Pancorvo we found the *posada* stable under repairs, and had to clear the manger of crumbling mortar to feed our beasts; but it appeared the slight sprinkling of lime which remained fertilised their appetites, for this time they ate their barley.

At Pancorvo we fairly entered the mountains by a remarkable gorge. The great green hills, crested and sprinkled with hoary ragged crags, seem like huge diluvian waves solidified and changed to turf and stone.

We stopped for the night at Miranda, and soon after sunset there came on a violent thunder-storm. The rosy flashes playing among the mountain-peaks, and the rolling thunder echoing down the valleys, were so pleasantly

Vitoria

sublime that I stood well on to ten minutes beneath the pelting rain to admire it. I dare say you think it was very absurd to expose myself to the wet in such a cause ; but I was sheltered beneath the ample folds of my *capa*, or I should not have been so child-(Harold)-ish.

Next day we rode into Vitoria, an uninteresting town, celebrated for tobacco and a battle. We filled our pouches with the former, but about the latter I cannot speak, for I grieve to say I never reached that volume of the "History of Europe," and this excellent work is not of dimensions amenable to form part of a travelling library on horseback.

But I suppose everybody who comes by, that knows a little about history and battles, contributes his mite of explanation to the previous labyrinthine confusion which the civilian mind is afflicted with at the very mention of battle-fields. We shall not sleep here, but go on in the evening to Salinas. You see our expedition is in its dregs—weary, both man and beast, with hard travelling. We have thus neither patience to go out of our way to find, wait for, or even invent adventures.

CHAPTER XXXIII

VILLA FRANCA, *May 19.*

THE day, which had been very rainy, cleared up towards evening, and we rode across a plain to the north of Vitoria, which we understood to be the battle-field. When we had got across it, and were beginning to rise a little towards the hills, a small village, called Arrayabe, was the scene of a combat,—not so important to the destinies of Europe perhaps,—but fraught with much more lively interest to us than that which took place on the plain we were leaving behind.

I was riding about thirty yards ahead, doing all I could to keep the limping and weary Moor to a brisk walk ; he drooping his head and stumbling along as if every step were to be his last. In the midst of the village we encountered the enemy, which was no other than a stout, slashing cock-tail mare and her foal.

The Moor at once forgot his languishing state, pricked up his ears, arched his neck, and shook his flowing mane. He sounded the powerful clarion of his nostrils, and was answered by shriller notes of defiance in return. His motive, probably no more than a polite ambition to make a gallant show as he passed the presence of this sleek mother of the stud, was sadly misconstrued by the maternal suspicions of that prudent matron.

She hastily made up her mind that the Moor's intentions

Battle (not) of Vitoria

were hostile towards her offspring, and, turning her heels, backed towards him, launching out furiously. The Moor, losing his temper at this unkind reception of his complimentary overtures, also turned his heels and backed towards her, snorting and kicking in like manner. I, on the other hand, in great bodily fear of being smashed to atoms in the encounter, kicked and spurred with great vehemence to get him out of harm's way, and just succeeded in escaping a shower of armed hoofs flashing in the immediate vicinity of my head and shoulders.

Turning round, I saw that Harry and the peaceable Cid (who had never uttered an offensive remark) were falling heirs to the catastrophe which the Moor had so nearly drawn down upon himself and his master.

I saw Harry fly off, and fall entangled among the heavy drapery of his cloak in the middle of the muddy road. The Cid retreated in great terror. I was considerably alarmed, thinking Harry must be killed by the kick, which seemed to have shot him off his saddle like a cricket-ball from a catapult. However, he jumped up in a moment, and finding a great stone, flung it at the mare, who, satisfied with victory, now returned to her foal.

But the mare's owner appearing in the nick of time, far from pitying Harry in his fallen and muddy plight, or congratulating him on his escape, began to use vituperative language to him for throwing stones at the mare. Hereupon Harry, whose feelings had been doubtless roused by the sudden emergency, immediately replied, that if he did not hold his tongue, he would throw a bigger stone at him ; so, as there was nothing more to be said, he mounted the Cid again, and we rode on.

It was dark before we descended to Salinas, which, as far as we could see, appeared to be situated on one side

Basque Provinces

of a deep valley, where the road begins to plunge downwards in zig-zags, from the high *plateau* levels of Central Spain.

We were spoken to, but not molested, by the Custom-house here, on entering the *Provincias Bascongadas*. We found we were in Biscay, too, in another way. The Basque race is reported to be proud, honest, and independent ; but one never acts upon the character of hearsay till it is confirmed by experience.

Near the entrance of the town, we presented ourselves before a large house, which we had been told was the *posada*. The door was closed, and we called and knocked lustily. At length a maiden appeared at a wicket.

“*Caramba!* is this a way to keep gentlemen waiting in the dark? Send the *mozo de la cuadra* to take our beasts, *carajo!*” But the young lady, not liking our salutation, which certainly savoured more of impatience than politeness, and observing by the flaring lamp in her hand that we looked more like bandits than gentlemen, told us demurely to go about our business, and would listen to no appeal, but shut the wicket in our faces.

Thus left in outer darkness, where we were at liberty to weep *à discrétion*, but were less likely to find materials to gnash our hungry teeth upon, Harry calmly suggested that, had our language been *civiller*, our reception might have been more cordial, and that we must polish up our free-and-easy Andalusian manners to suit the *Provincias Bascongadas*.

Turning our ponies' heads pensively down the steep street, we came to an humbler roof, where we had to put up our ponies in a sort of pig-sty cellar. Groping our way up an exceeding crooked staircase, under the conduct of a damsel of the house, we were introduced to our hostess, a

Resignation and Sausages

tall, high-featured, stately dame, in a small kitchen completely hung with festoons of red sausages, depending there to dry for the Vitoria market to-morrow morning.

We sat among the sausages smoking and trying to make the best of our fate, and conversing with our venerable hostess, while she dressed our supper. She was a respectable, motherly old lady, with a dignified gravity of manner, very different from the ordinary type of shrill, gossiping, slatternly *posaderas* in Spain at large. She and her daughters talked usually in Basque to one another, though they could all speak Spanish after a fashion.

She told us that her husband had been killed in the troubles, and she herself had been in prison five years for *oponion* (*oposicion*) to Christina, although she had no political preference for one party over another, but false witnesses had been her ruin. She was now poorer than she had been in her youth, and was obliged to keep a *casa de huespedes* for her livelihood, which she eked out with keeping pigs. I dare say, if we had not found the kitchen full of sausages, we should have found the stable full of swine.

By this time one of the daughters came up to say our room was ready, and our landlady recommended us to have supper served there. We went down and found a very decent bedroom, with clean and comfortable beds ; so that, after all, we had had our lesson of Biscayan manners, and not suffered so much inconvenience as we might have expected.

From Salinas, the road winds through fertile and populous valleys, among large green mountains, by the side of a swift and copious river. On the bank, a graven stone set forth that here a youth of happiest promise, the only pride of now childless parents, had been drowned while fishing ; from which we argued there must be fish in the stream ;

Basque Language

and indeed it looked as if good-sized trout were to be caught.

I cannot imagine a pleasanter excursion for people who like scenery and angling than to wander with a rod and sketch-book through these beautiful, well-watered valleys.

At Mondragon we baited, and I hung my cloak, damp with the rains of yesterday, from the railing of the balcony over the river, to dry in the sun. Below were a bevy of washerwomen chattering away in their language, which sounds a little like Welsh, but a nobler breadth of enunciation, and without that horrid lispng Ll. Here I took my first lesson in the Basque language of our landlady, and this is what I learnt :—

Egg-en-nóon (good day).

Gab-boón (good night).

Khat-tén (to eat).

Err-rat-tén (to drink).

On to Villa Real. Here a man treated for our ponies, but we could not do any business. We came in sight of a very grand, massive mountain, with a peak in front something like a saddle. We learned it was called Peña del Mezqueta, which sounds like a Moorish title.

At Villa Franca, a quaint, compact, old-fashioned little town, we stopped for the night. We fed the ponies on maize, which they ate greedily. A man in the stables treated for our horses, at least disparaged them, showing a disposition to buy ; but we had rather work them through to the end, for the frontier is only ten leagues further, which we hope to accomplish to-morrow.

Next morning, in high spirits, we began our last day's march among the winding valleys and over the round green mountain-flanks of the Pyrenees. We breakfasted at Tolosa on strawberries and cream. The people of this

The Pyrenees

mountain district seem honest, hearty, industrious folk. The dress is not unpicturesque. The blue or scarlet *berreta* of Bayonne, a large round flat cap, very like the Kilmarnock bonnet of our northern Celts ; the elastic knitted woollen vest of crimson, covered with a fret of blue, and a *faja*, make a more graceful costume at any rate than that of the short-waisted, dangle-capped men at the Catalonian end of the same range.

The cultivation of the land is peculiar ; you see a row of five or six men and women, each handling a sort of forked spade composed of two broad flat prongs ; with this they dig in a line, and by a simultaneous leverage, turn up a long deep sod.

Cart-wheels are of a simple construction ; instead of a nave and spokes, the wheel is merely a round thick board, three or four feet in diameter. Oxen are shod in a singular manner. The smithies have a stout frame-work of timber, where the ox is hoisted up by a broad belt under his belly, and all his legs lashed fast, in a position for the smith to work upon the hoofs at leisure. They have a very comical, if not tragical appearance, poor beasts, when stretched upon the rack in this manner.

At Ernani we dined. About half a mile before entering this village, as I crossed a bridge, or rather a viaduct, a walnut had stretched up its fragrant branches from below, and offered to my notice three green nuts, in excellent condition to make pickles.

I had been fasting since six in the morning (except that small plate of Alpine strawberries at Tolosa,) and was desperately hungry and thirsty. In this condition of gastric craving, the idea of walnut-pickle crossed my mind as a refreshing reminiscence.

I stretched forth my hand, gathered the nuts, and ate the

My Moorish Pouch

greater part of one of them, which I found very pungent and astringent, but of a fine aromatic flavour, acting as an agreeable stimulant to my exhausted vitals. But I had not eaten this trash above two minutes, when I was seized with qualms, and began to vomit violently.

As I had but little wherewithal, I seemed in a fair way to throw up all my inwards, and remain on the roadside completely turned inside out, with an Andalusian suit lining my intestinal canal, and the mucous membrane by way of costume. Several peasant women passed by while I was retching in a terrible manner ; but they said nothing and went on, with a look of suspicious horror, as if I were some plague-stricken wretch, whom it would be unsafe to help.

I lay down in a ditch (with my head pillowed on a grassy bank), but I had the good fortune not to die in it, though the occasion seemed apposite ; and feeling better after a quarter of an hour or so, rode into Ernani. Harry, who was riding a hundred yards in advance at the time, had gone on, unaware of my sudden seizure ; for though he was not out of sight when my indisposition seized me, I felt so faint that I could not cry out.

I was not in the least the worse, and ate a very hearty dinner at the *posada*, where there was a great feast going on ; it being Ascension-day, and the house full of carousing people, and overflowing with good cheer of all kinds.

I discovered here that I had lost my Moorish pouch, which I should grieve for in itself, but it contained other valuables, including two sets of studs, four of my vestal virgin buttons, the drum-shaped silver seal I made at Cailly, my mermaid ring, and all my collection of coins ; except my luck-money, which I carry strung round my neck. I think I must have left it at Villa Franca ; so good bye to them.

Some of them, I do not doubt, will circulate in Europe as

From Sea to Sea

genuine antiques, and if so, I shall not so much regret the trouble they cost me in making.

YRUN, May 20.

All Spain lies behind us! We are at the end of our journey. This afternoon, as we threaded the green valleys of the Pyrenees, a flutter stirred the sultry air, and the sea-breeze met us as we trudged along, leading our weary beasts by the bridle.

As the sunset was wreathing the mountain-peaks with rose and lilac garlands, we pressed on over ridge after ridge, often disappointed, but still hoping to get a view *out* of Spain before the day should fade.

At length, at the very point of sunset, we turned the shoulder of the last hill, and the great blue ocean-plains lay below us. Eight hundred weary miles of zig-zag riding had brought us from Velez, where we saw the last of the Mediterranean, and now the unquiet Bay of Biscay slept like a mill-pond between us and England.

The sunset died away into dusk as we rode down into Yrun, beyond whose river darkened away in dim perspective the undulating frontier of *La belle France*.

The poor ponies, unconscious of their destiny, and I suppose catching some touch of enthusiasm by sympathy with their masters, went into the end of their last stage with more spirit than has been their wont of late.

Since coming in and giving them their corn, I have been to see them and dressed the Moor's fetlock. Poor beasts, we cannot tell what will become of them now. We have worked them hard: but I fear they may find still harsher taskmasters, who will feed them ill and work them till they

An Yrun Thing

are wretched bags of bones, with sore backs, like many of their brethren we have seen on the road.

They have been our companions and our daily care now for three or four months ; we have had much trouble and many differences of opinion with them since our first struggles in the *dehesa*, near Seville ; they are not particularly amiable or engaging in their dispositions ; for the Moor is a stupid, hot-headed fool, and the Cid a cunning, sulky, cowardly beast, and yet we feel as if a close domestic tie was about to be snapped ; and the unconsciousness of the poor wretches, as we hear them chumping their last feed of corn administered by our hands, makes the impending separation more melancholy.

But sell them we must, for we have no other means of raising money to get to Bayonne. I have come in with two reals and a half (about sevenpence sterling), as the total residue of the funds with which I left Madrid ; so that my getting to Yrun at all may be said to have been a near-run thing.

Since Madrid we have travelled 100 leagues, or about 270 miles, for the modern league is not three miles, as the ancient one was. In some of the by-roads of Andalusia the nominal league was often nearer four miles than three, but on the high roads the leagues are always short.

CHAPTER XXXIV

YRUN, *Friday, May 21.*

“It is nought, it is nought, saith the buyer,” (especially of horse-flesh), “but when he goeth his way then he boasteth !”¹

Solomon must in his time have had occasion to sell something ; for he speaks more feelingly than if he had always been a buyer himself, and never experienced the wearisome disgust of waiting for reluctant customers.

But to return to our ponies. To-day we have been doing our endeavours to dispose of them. Our first step was, early in the morning, to execute an attractive *affiche*. At the top of this document pranced a black and a chestnut charger. The legend ran thus:—

AQUI ESTAN PARA VENDERSE
DOS JAQUITAS ANDALUZAS,
MUY BONITAS Y MUY FUERTES.
EN SEVILLA HAN NACIDO,
DE SANGRE ARABA RANCIA.
HASTA YRUN YA HAN LEGADO
POR RONDA, GIBRALTAR, GRANADA,
MADRID, SEGOVIA, VALLADOLID,
PONIENDO DIEZ LEGUAS AL DIA.

¹ Proverbs.

The Placard

PUES JUZGUEN VMDES. SI SON BUENAS
LAS JAQUITAS. †

APLICARSE A DON ENRIQUEZ,
Parador de Las Postas.

This notice is posted up on the stable-door, which opens on the main street of the town. Quantities of people have been looking at it, and some have been in to inspect the ponies.

We have given out that we are in no hurry to sell, and finding Yrun a pleasant place, we shall take our leisure and wait till we have an offer that suits us. It is twelve o'clock.

By the bye, in the anxiety about our ponies, I have never been to the post-office. I will thither at once, for who knows but I may find a letter.

It is night. I have just come back from the sea-shore, where I waited to see the sun go down upon the waters—listening to the music of the waves, which, as they now are all that lie between me and my native land, seem as they come tumbling on the beach to bring soft murmuring messages from my home; and the whispering sea-breeze too, that lightly brushes across the feathery fringes of foam. Mere fanciful nonsense is this; for the real fountain of sweet thoughts and reveries was the letter I carried there to read over and over again, till the last flush faded in the

† Translation:—"Here are to be sold two Andalusian ponies, very pretty and stout. They were born in Seville, of ancient Arab race. They have already arrived as far as Yrun by Ronda, Gibraltar, Granada, Madrid, Segovia, Valladolid, doing ten leagues per day. Let your worships therefore judge whether the ponies are good.

"Apply to Don Enriquez, Diligence Inn."

Like a Glow-Worm in the Sky

western heaven ; while the murmuring waves and the whispering sea-breeze only made a pleasant accompaniment to the music of those loving words.

The evening star came out in the purpling sky like a glow-worm in a violet. By the way, I suppose violets shut up their fragrant chalices at sundown : therefore, no glow-worm probably ever did appear in a violet, so let us drop the simile ; and indeed I don't see that the evening star gains anything by being likened to a dirty little phosphoric worm.

But poor Venus is used to these odious comparisons by this time, for she has always been a favourite piece of furniture with poets and novelists—an officious set of fellows, who never can inform their readers that something does something, without gratuitously adding that it does it in the same manner as some other thing does something else.

Be this as it may, Venus came out as Venus is in the habit of coming out of clear evenings at this time of year, and obligingly lighted me home to the *Parador*, where we had our tea ; and Harry, who has been sitting at home all day at the receipt of customers, told me he had got a bid of two-and-twenty dollars for the two beasts, which, though it was an ignominiously small sum, he thought it would be better to accept rather than lose time, for we have had our money's worth out of them on the road.

We went out to get our passports *viséd*, so as to be ready to set off to-morrow morning by the Bayonne diligence. As we were discoursing with one of the officers of police before the door of the *bureau*, and advertising our ponies by telling the price they would probably have to go at if they were not rescued by some more worthy bidder, we were joined by a blustering corporal.

“He had heard of our case, and it was a shame to take advantage of the hurry of travellers, to get valuable

The Corporal's Tale

animals for nothing but a mere *carajo* of an old song. If it was his case, he would do as an officer in his regiment had done at Valencia.

“This officer had a splendid horse, and when his regiment was suddenly ordered away to Tarifa, *carajo!* nobody would make him a bid for the horse, though he was worth at least three hundred dollars, *carajo!* thinking, no doubt, that by hanging back they would get him for almost a *carajo*.

“But when he was going to embark, he had the horse led down to the shore, and some thought he would take the horse aboard with him; but that was impossible, for it was a foot regiment, and he had no permission. So when he had to go aboard himself, in the presence of those scoundrelly dealers who had come to beat him down to the lowest he would take, he said, ‘*Carajo!* you shall not cheat me, *carajo!* You would not give me a fair price, and, *carajo!* you shall have him for nothing—but, at the same time, I will make it a fair price, for he shall not be worth a *carajo*.’ Whereupon he unclasped his *navaja* and cut the horse's throat, and gashed the hide all over, so that the skin should be worth nothing either, *carajo!* and I saw it done, *carajo!* and, *carajo!* I would advise you to do the same, *carajo!!!*”

Soon after returning to our hotel, the customer appeared. He is the *administrador* of the government lottery-office here, and has a bad, hellite, hang-dog cast of countenance.

He beat us down from thirty dollars, at which we had resolutely stood for some time, to twenty-five; and finally we closed the bargain at twenty-three—about five guineas. The ponies originally cost us sixteen. So that we have practically paid about five guineas and a half each for a thousand miles of locomotion, which is not very dear.

Being now restored to a state of solvency, we have taken

Conclusion

our places in the diligence. To-morrow we shall cross the Bidasoa, and be able to reinforce our exchequer at a civilised banker's in Bayonne. A few days of rapid modern travelling are all now between us and home.

D.P.
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